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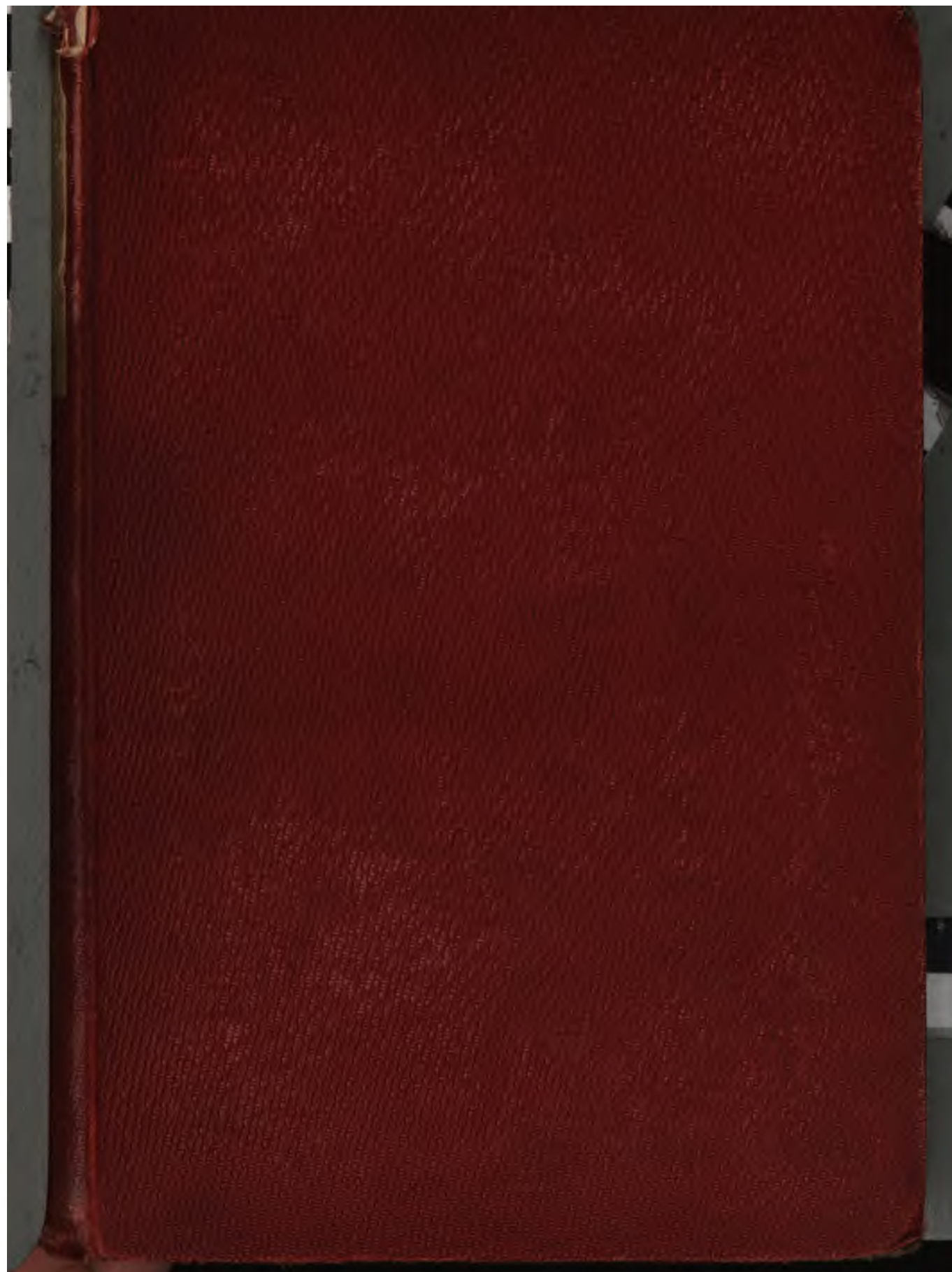
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CONFESSIO AMANTIS



GOWER'S CONFESSION OF A LOVER

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II.

CONFESSIO AMANTIS OF

Iohn **C**ollier

EDITED AND COLLATED
WITH THE BEST MANUSCRIPTS BY
DR. REINHOLD PAULI



VOL. II.

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CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

Incipit Liber Quartus.

*Dicunt accidiam fore nutricem viciorum,
Torpet et in cunctis tardaue lenta bonis,
Que fieri possent hodie transfert piger in cras
Furatoque prius hostia claudit equo.
Poscenti tardo negat emolumenta Cupido,
Sed Venus in celeri ludit amore viri.*



PON the vices to procede
After the cause of mannes
dede
The firste point of slouth
I calle
Lacheffe, and is the chefe
of alle

Hic in quarto libro loquitur confessor de speciebus accidie, quarum primam tardacionem vocat, cuius conditionem pertractans amanti super hoc consequenter opponit.

And hath this properlich of kind
To leven alle thing behind.
Of that he mighte do nowe here
He tarieth all the longe yere
And evermore he saith: to morwe,
And so he woll his time borwe

And wissheth after : god me sende,
 That whan he weneth have an ende,
 Than is he furthest to beginne.
 Thus bringeth he many a mischefe inne
 Unware, till that he be mischeved
 And may nought thanne be releved.
 And right so nouthere more ne lesse
 It stant of love and of lacheffe.
 Some time he sloutheth on a day,
 That he never after gete may.

Confessor. Now sone, as of this ilke thing,
 If thou have any knouleching,
 That thou to love hast done er this,

Confessio amantis. Tell on. My gode fader, yis.
 As of lacheffe I am beknowe,
 That I may stonde upon his rowe,
 As I that am clad of his fuite,
 For whanne I thought my pursuite
 To make and therto set a day
 To speke unto that swete may,
 Lacheffe bad abide yit
 And bare on honde it was no wit
 Ne time for to speke as tho.
 Thus with his tales to and fro
 My time in tarieng he drough,
 Whan there was time good inough,
 He said another time is better,
 Thou shalt now senden her a letter
 And par cas write more plein
 Than thou by mouthe durdest fain.

Thus have I lette time slide
For flouthe, and kepte nought my tide,
So that lacheffe with his vice
Full oft hath made my wit so nice,
That what I thought to speke or do
With tarieng he held me so,
Til whan I wolde and mighte nought,
I not what thing was in my thought
Or it was drede, or it was shame.
But ever in ernest and in game
I wit there is long time passed,
But yet is nought the love lassed,
Whiche I unto my lady have,
For though my tunge is slow to crave
At alle time, as I have bede,
Min hert stant ever in o stede
And axeth besiliche grace,
The whiche I may nought yet embrace,
And god wot that is malgre min.
For this I wot right well afn,
My grace cometh so selde aboute,
That is the flouthe, which I doubte
More than of all the remenaunt,
Whiche is to love appartenaunt.

And thus as touchend of lacheffe,
As I have tolde, I me confesse
To you, my fader, I besече
That furthermore ye wol me teche,
And if there be to this matere
Some goodly tale for to here,

4 *CONFESSIO AMANTIS.*

How I may do lacheffe away,
That ye it wolden telle, I prey.

Confessor. To wisse the, my sone, and rede
Among the tales, whiche I rede,
An olde ensample therupon
Now herken, and I wol telle on.

Hic ponit confessor
exemplum contra istos,
qui in amoris causa
tardantes delinquant.
Et narrat, qualiter Dido
regina Cartaginis
Eneam, ab incendiis
Troie fugitivum, in
amorem suum gavisam
accepit, qui cum pos-
tea in partes Italie a
Cartagine bellaturum
se transtulit nimiam-
que ibidem moram
faciens tempus reddi-
tus sui ad Didonem
ultra modum tarda-
vit, ipsa intolerabili
dolore concussa sui
cordis intima mortali
gladio transfodit.

Ayein lacheffe in loves cas
I finde, how whilom Eneas,
Whom Anchises to sone hadde,
With great navie, which he ladde,
Fro Troie arriveth at Cartage.
Wherfore a while his herbergage
He toke, and it betidde so
With her, which was a quene tho
Of the citee, his acquaintance
He wan, whos name in remembraunce
Is yet, and Dido was she hote,
Which loveth Eneas so hote
Upon the wordes, whiche he saide,
That all her hert on him she laide
And did all holy what he wolde.
But after that, as it be sholde,
Fro thenne he goth toward Itaile
By ship and there his arrivaile
Hath take and shope him for to ride.
But she, which may nought longe abide
The hote peine of loves throwe,
Anon within a litel throwe
A letter unto her knight hath write
And did him plainly for to wite,

If he made any tarieng
To drecche of his ayein comming,
That she ne might him fele and se,
She shulde stonde in such degre
As whilom stood a swan to-fore
Of that she hadde her make lore
For sorwe a fether into her brain
She shof and hath her selve slain.
As king Menander in a lay
The soth hath founde, where she lay
Spraulend with her winges twey
As she, which shulde thanne deie
For love of him, which was her make.
And so shal I do for thy sake
This quene saide, wel I wote.

Lo, to Enee thus she wrote
With many another word of pleint.
But he, which had his thoughtes feint
Towardes love and full of slouth,
His time let, and that was routhe.
For she, which loveth him to-fore,
Desireth ever more and more
And whan she sigh him tary so,
Her herte was so full of wo,
That compleignend manyfolde
She hath her owne tale tolde
Unto her self and thus she spake:
Ha, who found ever suche a lacke
Of slouth in any worthy knight?
Now wote I well my deth is dight

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Through him, which shuld have be my life.
 But for to stinten all this strife
 Thus whan she sigh none other bote,
 Right even unto her herte rote
 A naked swerd anone she threste
 And thus she gat her selve reste
 In remembraunce of alle flowe.

Confessor. Wherof, my sone, thou might knowe,
 How tarieng upon the nede
 In loves cause is for to drede.
 And that hath Dido fore abought,
 Whose deth shall ever be bethought.
 And evermore if I shal seche
 In this matere another speche
 In a cronique I finde write
 A tale, whiche is good to wite.

Hic loquitur super
 eodem, qualiter
 Penelope Ulixem
 maritum suum in
 obsidione Troie di-
 ucius morantem ob-
 ipsius ibidem tarda-
 cionem epistola sua
 redarguit.

At Troie whan king Ylixes
 Upon the siege among the pres
 Of hem, that worthy knightes were,
 Abode long time stille there,
 In thilke time a man may se,
 How goodly that Penelope,
 Which was to him his trewe wife,
 Of his lacheffe was pleintife,
 Wherof to Troie she him sende
 Her will by letter, thus spekende :

My worthy love and lord also,
 It is and hath ben ever so,
 That where a woman is alone,
 It maketh a man in his persone

The more hardy for to wowe,
In hope that she wolde bowe
To such thinge, as his wille were,
While that her lord were elles where.
And of my self I telle this,
For it so longe passed is,
Sith first that ye fro home wente,
That well nigh every man is wente
To there I am, while ye be oute,
Had made and eche of hem aboute,
Which love can, my love secheth
With great praier and me besecheth.
And some maken great manace,
That if they mighten come in place,
Where that they mighten her will have,
There is no thing me shulde save,
That they ne wolde werche thinges.
And some tellen me tidinges,
That ye ben dede, and some sain,
That certainly ye ben besain
To love a newe and leve me.
But how as ever that it be,
I thonke unto the goddes alle
As yet for ought that is befalle,
May no man do my chekes rede.
But netheles it is to drede,
That lacheffe in continuaunce
Fortune might suche a chaunce,
Which no man after sholde amende.
Lo, thus this lady compleignende

A letter unto her lord hath write
 And praid him, that he wolde wite
 And thenke, how that she was al his,
 And that he tarie nought in this,
 But that he wold his love acquite
 To her ayeinward and nought write,
 But come him self in alle haste,
 That he none other paper waste,
 So that he kepe and holde his trouthe
 Withoute let of any flouthe.

Unto her lord and love liege
 To Troie, where the grete siege
 Was laid, this letter was conveied.
 And he, which wifdome hath purveied
 Of all that to reson belongeth,
 With gentil herte it underfongeth.
 And whan he hath it overrad,
 In parte he was right inly glad
 And eke in parte he was disefed.
 But love his hert hath so through fefed
 With pure ymaginacion,
 That for none occupacion,
 Whiche he can take on other fide,
 He may nought flit his herte aside,
 For that his wife him had enformed,
 Wherof he hath him self conformed
 With all the will of his corage
 To shape and take the viage
 Homeward, what time that he may.
 So that him thenketh of a day

A thousand yere till he may se
 The visage of Penelope,
 Whiche he desireth most of alle.
 And whan the time is so befalle,
 That Troie was distruied and brent,
 He made non delaieement,
 But goth him home in alle hie,
 Where that he found to-fore his eye
 His worthy wife in good estate,
 And thus was cessed the debate
 Of love, and slouth was excused,
 Which doth great harm, wher it is used,
 And hindreth many a cause honest.

For of the grete clerk Grostest
 I rede how busy that he was
 Upon the clergie an heved of bras
 To forge and make it for to telle
 Of suche thinges as befelle.
 And seven yeres befinesse
 He laide, but for the lachesse
 Of half a minute of an houre
 Fro firste he began laboure
 He lost all that he hadde do.
 And other while it fareth so
 In loves cause, who is slowe,
 That he without under the wowe
 By night stant full oft a colde,
 Which mighte, if that he had wolde
 His time kept, have be withinne.

But slouth may nought profit winne,

Nota hic de quodam astrologo super eodem, qui quoddam opus ingeniosum quasi ad complementum septennio perdu-
 cens unius momenti tardacione omnem sui operis diligenciam penitus frustravit.

Nota adhuc contra tardacionem de vir-

ginibus fatuis, que
nimiam moram fa-
cientes intrante
sponso ad nupcias
cum ipso non in-
troierunt.

But he may finge in his carole,
How latewar came to the dole,
Where he no good receive might.
And that was proved well by night
Whilome of the maidens five,
Whan thilke lord came for to wive,
For that her oile was away
To light her lampes in his wey,
Her flouthe brought it so aboute
Fro him that they be shet withoute.

Confessor. Wherof, my sone, be thou ware,
Als ferforth as I telle dare.
For love muste ben awaited,
And if thou be nought well affaited
In love to escheue flouthe,
My sone, for to telle trouthe
Thou might nought of thy self ben able
To winne love or make it stable,
All though thou mightest love acheve.

Confessio amantis. My fader, that I may well leve.
But me was never assigned place,
Where yet to geten any grace,
Ne me was non such time appointed,
For than I wolde I were unjointed
Of every limme that I have,
And I ne shulde kepe and save
Min houre bothe and eke my stede,
If my lady it hadde bede.
But she is otherwise avised
Than graunte suche a time assised.

And nethelss of my lacheffe
There hath be no default I gesse
Of time losse, if that I mighte.
But yet her liketh nought alighte
Upon no lure, which I caste.
For ay the more I crie faste
The lasse her liketh for to here.
So for to speke of this matere
I seche that I may nought finde,
I haste and ever I am behinde
And wot nought what it may amounte.
But fader, upon min accompte,
Whiche ye ben set to examine
Of shrifte after the discipline,
Say what your best counseile is.

My sone, my counseil is this.
How so it stonde of time go,
Do forth thy besynesse so,
That no lacheffe in the be founde,
For slouth is mighty to confounde
The spede of every mannes werke.
For many a vice, as faith the clerke,
There hongen upon slouthes lappe
Of fuche as make a man mishappe
To pleigne and tell of: had I wist.
And therupon if that the list
To knowe of slouthes cause more
In special yet overmore
There is a vice full grevable
To him, which is therof coultable;

Confessor.

And stant of alle vertue bare
Here after as I shall declare.

2. *Qui nichil attemptat, nichil expedit, oreque muto
Munus amicicie vir sibi raro capit.
Est modus in verbis, sed ei qui parcat amori
Verba referre sua non favet ullus amor.*

Hic loquitur confessor de quadam specie accidie, que pusillanimitas dicta est, cuius ymaginativa formido neque virtutes aggredi, neque vicia fugere audet, sicque utriusque vite tam active quam contemplative premium non attingit.

Touchend of slouth in his degre,
There is yet pusillamite,
Which is to say in this langage
He that hath litel of corage
And dare no mannes werk beginne,
So may he nought by reson winne.
For who that nought dare undertake,
By right he shall no profit take.
But of this vice the nature
Dare nothing set in aventure,
Him lacketh bothe worde and dede,
Wherof he shuld his cause spede.
He woll no manhode understonde,
For ever he hath drede upon honde
All is perill that he shall say,
Him thenketh the wolfe is in the way.
And of ymaginacion
He maketh his excusacion
And feigneth cause of pure drede
And ever he faileth ate nede,
Till all be spilt, that he with deleth.
He hath the fore, which no man heleth,
The whiche is cleped lacke of herte,
Though every grace about him sterte,

He woll nought ones stere his fote,
So that by reson lese he mote,
That woll nought aunter for to winne.

And so forth, sone, if we beginne
To speke of love and his service,
There ben truanes in suche a wise,
That lacken herte, whan best were
They speken of love, and right for fere
They waxen dombe and dare nought telle
Withouten soun, as doth the belle,
Whiche hath no clapper for to chime.
And right so they, as for the time
Ben herteles withoute speche
Of love and dare nothing beseche.
And thus they lese and winne nought.
Forthy my sone, if thou art ought
Coulpable as touchend of this flouthe,
Shrive the therof and tell me trouthe.

Confessor.

My fader, I am all beknowe,
That I have ben one of the slowe
As for to telle in loves cas.
Min herte is yet and ever was,
As though the world shuld al to-breke,
So ferful, that I dare nought speke
Of what purpos that I have nome,
Whan I toward my lady come,
But let it passe and overgo.

Amans.

My sone, do no more so.
For after that a man pursueth,
To love so fortune sueth

Confessor.

Ful oft and yiveth her happy chaunce
 To him, which maketh continuaunce
 To preie love and to beseche,
 As by ensample I shall the teche.

Hic in amoris causa loquitur contra pusillanimes et dicit, quod amans pro timore verbis obtumescere non debet, sed concinnando preces sui amoris expeditionem tucius prosequatur, et ponit confessor exemplum, qualiter Pigmaleon pro eo, quod preces continuavit, quandam ymaginem eburneam, cuius pulcritudinis concupiscencia illaqueatus extitit, in carnem et sanguinem ad latum suum transformatam senciit.

I finde, how whilom there was one,
 Whose name was Pigmaleon,
 Which was a lusty man of youthe.
 The werkes of entaile he couthe
 Above all other men as tho.
 And through fortune it felle him so
 As he, whom love shall travaile,
 He made an ymage of entaile
 Lich to a woman in semblaunce
 Of feture and of contenaunce,
 So faire yet never was figure.
 Right as a lives creature
 She semeth, for of yvor white
 He hath it wrought of such delite,
 That she was rody on the cheke
 And rede on both her lippes eke,
 Wherof that he him self beguileth.
 For with a goodly loke she smileth,
 So that through pure impressioun
 Of his ymagination
 With all the herte of his corage
 His love upon this faire ymage
 He set, and her of love preide.
 But she no worde ayeinward said.
 The longe day what thing he dede
 This ymage in the same stede

Was ever by, that ate mete
He wold her serve and praide her etc
And put unto her mouth the cup.
And whan the bord was taken up,
He hath her unto his chambre nome,
And after whan the night was come,
He laide her in bed all naked.
He was forwept, he was forwaked,
He kiste her colde lippes ofte
And wissheth, that they weren softe.
And ofte he rouneth in her ere,
And ofte his arm now here now there
He laide, as he her wolde embrace.
And ever among he axeth grace,
As though she wiste what it mente.
And thus him self he gan tormente
With such disese of loves peine,
That no man might him more peine.
But how it were of his penaunce
He made fuche contenaunce
Fro day to night and praid so longe,
That his praier is underfonge,
Which Venus of her grace herde
By night, and whan that he worst ferde
And it lay in his naked arme,
The colde ymage he feeleth warme
Of fleshe and bone and full of life.

Lo, thus he wanne a lusty wife,
Whiche obeisfaunt was at his will.
And if he wolde have hold him still

And nothing spoke, he shuld have failed.
 But for he hath his word travailed
 And durste speke, his love he spedde
 And had all that he wolde abedde.
 For er they wente than a two,
 A knave child betwene hem two
 They gete, which was after hote
 Paphus, of whom yet hath the note
 A certain ile, which Paphos
 Men clepe, and of his name it rose.

Confessor. By this ensample thou might finde,
 That word may worche above kinde.
 Forthy my sone, if that thou spare
 To speke, lost is all thy fare,
 For slouthe bringeth in alle wo.
 And over this to loke also
 The god of love is favorable
 To hem, that ben of love stable.
 And many a wonder hath befalle,
 Wherof to speke amanges alle,
 If that the list to taken hede,
 Therof a solempne tale I rede,
 Whiche I shall telle in remembraunce
 Upon the sorte of loves chaunce.

Hic ponit exemplum
 super eodem, qualiter
 rex Ligdus uxori sue
 Thelacuse pregnant
 minabatur, quod si fi-
 liam pareret, infans
 occideretur, que ta-
 men postea cum fili-
 am ediderat, Yfis dea
 partus tunc prefens

The king Ligdus upon a strife
 Spake unto Thelacuse his wife,
 Which thanne was with childe grete,
 He swore it sholde nought be lette,
 That if she have a doughter bore,
 That it ne sholde be forlore

And slain, wherof she sory was.
 So it befelle upon this cas,
 Whan she delivered sholde be,
 Yfis by nighte in privete,
 Whiche of childing is the goddesse,
 Came for to helpe in that distresse,
 Till that this lady was all small
 And had a doughter forth with all,
 Which the goddesse in alle way
 Bad kepe, and that they sholde say,
 It were a sone. And thus Yphis
 They named him, and upon this
 The fader was made for to wene.
 And thus in chambre with the quene
 This Yphis was forth drawe tho
 And clothed and arraied so
 Right as a kinges sone sholde.
 Till after, as fortune it wolde,
 Whan it was of a ten yere age,
 Him was betake in mariage
 A dukes doughter for to wedde,
 Whiche Iante hight, and ofte abedde
 These children lien, she and she,
 Whiche of one age bothe be.
 So that withinne time of yeres
 To-gider, as they ben play-feres
 Liggend abedde upon a night
 Nature, which doth every wight
 Upon her lawe for to muse,
 Constreigneth hem, so that they use

filiam nomine filii
 Yphiappellari ipsam-
 que more masculin edu-
 care admonuit, quam
 pater filium credens,
 ipsam in maritagium
 filie cuiusdam princi-
 pis etate solita copu-
 lavit, sed cum Yphis
 debitum sue conjugii
 unde solvere non ha-
 buit, deos in sui adju-
 torium interpellabat,
 qui super hoc miserti
 femineum genus in
 masculinum ob af-
 fectum nature in Y-
 phe per omnia trans-
 mutarunt.

Thing, which to hem was all unknowe,
 Wherof Cupide thilke throwe
 Toke pite for the grete love
 And let do sette kinde above,
 So that her lawe may ben used
 And they upon her lust excused.
 For love hateth nothing more
 Than thing, which stant ayein the lore
 Of that nature in kinde hath fet.
 Forthy Cupide hath so beset
 His grace upon this aventure
 That be accordant to nature,
 Whan that he figh his time best,
 That eche of hem hath other keft,
 Transformeth Yphe into a man,
 Wherof the kinde love he wan
 Of lusty yonge Iante his wife.
 And tho they ledde a merie life,
 Which was to kinde none offence.

Confessor.

And thus to take an evidence
 It semeth love is welwillende
 To hem, that ben continuende
 With besy herte to pursue
 Thing, which that is to love due.
 Wherof, my sone, in this matere
 Thou might ensample taken here,
 That with thy grete besinesse
 Thou might atteigne the richesse
 Of love, that there be no slouth.

Amans.

I dare well say by my trouth,

Als ferre as my wit can seche,
 My fader, as for lacke of speche,
 But so as I me shrofe to-fore,
 There is none other time lore,
 Wherof there mighte be obstacle
 To lette love of his miracle,
 Whiche I besече day and night.
 But fader, so as it is right
 In forme of shrifte to be knowe
 What thing belongeth to the slowe,
 Your faderhode I wolde pray,
 If there be further any way
 Touchend unto this ilke vice.

My sone ye, of this office
 There serveth one in special,
 Which lost hath his memorial,
 So that he can no wit witholde
 In thing, which he to kepe his holde
 Wherof full ofte him self he greveth.
 And who that most upon him leveth,
 Whan that his wittes ben so weived,
 He may full lightly be deceived.

Confessor.

*Mentibus oblitus alienis labitur ille,
 Quem probat accidia non meminisse sui.
 Sic amor incautus, qui non memoratur ad horas,
 Perdit et offendit, quod cuperare nequit.*

3.

To serve accidie in his office,
 There is of slouth an other vice,
 Which cleped is foryetelnesse,
 That nought may in his herte presse

Hic tractat confessor de vicio oblivionis, quam mater eius accidia ad omnes virtutum memorias necnon

et in amoris causa
immemorem con-
stituit.

Of vertue, which reson hath set,
So clene his wittes he foryete.
For in tellinge of his tale
No more his herte than his male
Hath remembraunce of thilke forme,
Wherof he sholde his wit enforme
As than, and yet ne wot he why.
Thus is his purpos nought forthy
Forlore of that he wolde bidde
And scarfely, if he seeth the thridde
To love of that he hadde ment.
Thus many a lover hath be shent.
Telle on therefore, hast thou ben one
Of hem, that slouth hath so begonne?

Confessio amantis.

Ye fader, ofte it hath ben so,
That whan I am my lady fro
And thenke untoward her drawe,
Than cast I many a newe lawe
And all the world torne up so down
And so recorde I my lessõ
And write in my memoriall
What I to her telle shall,
Right all the mater of my tale.
But all nis worth a nutteshale.
For whan I come there she is,
I have it all foryete iwis
Of that I thoughte for to telle
I can nought than unnethes spelle,
That I wende altherbest have rad,
So fore I am of her adrad.

For as a man that sodeinly
A goft beholdeth fo fare I,
So that for fere I can nought gete
My wit, but I my felf foryete,
That I wot never, what I am,
Ne whider I fhall, ne whenne I cam,
But mufe as he, that were amafed.
Lich to the boke, in whiche is rafed
The letter and may nothing be rad,
So ben my wittes overlad,
That what as ever I thought have fpoken,
It is out of min herte ftoken
And ftonde, as who faith, doumbe and defe,
That all nis worth an yvy lefe,
Of that I wende well have faide.
And ate laft I make abraide,
Caft up min heed and loke aboute
Right as a man, that were in doubte
And wot not, where he fhall become.
Thus am I oft all overcome
There as I wende beft to ftonde.
But after, whan I underftonde
And am in other place alone,
I make many a wofull mone
Unto my felf and fpeke fo :

Ha fool, where was thine herte tho,
Whan thou thy worthy lady figh,
Were thou afered of her eye?
For of her hond there is no drede,
So well I knowe her womanhede,

That in her is no more outrage
 Than in a childe of thre yere age.
 Why hast thou drede of so good one,
 Whom alle vertue hath begone,
 That in her is no violence
 But goodly hede and innocence
 Withouten spot of any blame.
 Ha, nice herte, fy for shame,
 A cowarde herte of love unlered,
 Wherof art thou so sore afered,
 That thou thy tunge suffrest frese
 And wolt thy gode wordes lese,
 Whan thou hast founde time and space,
 How sholdest thou deserve grace,
 Whan thou thy self darst axe none?
 But all thou hast foryete anone.
 And thus dispute in loves lore,
 But helpe ne finde I nought the more,
 But stomble upon min owne treine
 And make an eking of my peine.
 For ever whan I thenke amonge,
 Howe all is on my self alonge
 I say: O fool of alle fooles
 Thou farest as he betwene two stoles
 That wolde sit and goth to grounde.
 It was ne never shall be founde
 Betwene foryetelnesse and drede,
 That man shulde any cause spede.
 And thus, min holy father dere,
 Toward my self, as ye may here,

I pleigne of my foryetelnesse.
But elles all the bufinesse,
That may be take of mannes thought,
My herte taketh and is through fought
To thenken ever upon that swete
Withoute flouthe I you behete.
For what so falle or wel or wo,
That thought foryete I nevermo,
Where so I laugh, or so I loure
Nought half a minute of an houre
Ne might I lette out of my minde,
But if I thought upon that ende,
Therof me shall no flouthe lette,
Till deth out of this world me fette,
All though I had on fuche a ring,
As Moises through his enchaunting
Sometime in Ethiope made,
Whan that he Tharbis wedded had,
Which ringe bare of oblivion
The name, and that was by refon,
That were it on a finger fate,
Anone his love he so foryate,
As though he had it never knowe.
And so it fell that ilke throwe,
Whan Tharbis had it on her honde,
No knouleching of him she fonde,
But all was clene out of memoire,
As men may rede in hystoire.
And thus he wente quite away,
That never after that ilke day

She thought, that there was such a one.
All was foryete and overgone.
But in good feith so may nought I.
For she is ever faste by
So nigh, that she min herte toucheth
That for no thing that flouthe voucheth
I may foryete her lefe ne loth.
For over all where as she goth,
Min herte folweth her aboute.
Thus may I say withouten doubte,
For bet, for wers, for ought, for nought
She passeth never fro my thought,
But whan I am there, as she is,
Min hert, as I you said er this,
Somtime of her is fore adrad
And sometime is overglad
All out of reule and out of space.
For whan I se her goodly face
And thenke upon her highe pris,
As though I were in paradis,
I am so ravisshed of the sight,
That speke unto her I ne might
As for the time, though I wolde.
For I ne may my witte unfolde
To finde o worde of that I mene,
But all it is foryete clene.
And though I stonde there a mile,
All is foryete for the while.
A tunge I have and wordes none.
And thus I stonde and thenke alone

Of thing that helpeth ofte nought.
But what I had afore thought
To speke, whan I come there,
It is foryete, as nought ne were.
And stonde amased and affoted,
That of no thing, which I have noted,
I can nought than a note finge,
But all is out of knoulechinge.
Thus what for joy and what for drede
All is foryeten ate nede,
So that, my fader, of this flouthe
I have you said the pleine trouthe,
Ye may it, as ye list, redresse.
For thus stant my foryetelnesse
And eke my pusillamite.
Say now forth what ye list to me,
For I wol only do by you.

My sone, I have wel herd, how thou
Hast said, and that thou must amende.
For love his grace wol nought fende
To that man, which dare axe none.
For this we knowen everychone,
A mannes thought withoute speche
God wot, and yet that men besече
His will is. For withoute bedes
He doth his grace in fewe stedes.
And what man that foryete him selve
Among a thousand be nought twelve,
That wol him take in remembraunce,
But let him falle and take his chaunce.

Confessor.

Forthy pull up a besy herte,
 My sone, and let no thing asterte
 Of love fro thy besinesse.
 For touching of foryetelnesse,
 Which many a love hath set behinde,
 A tale of great ensample I finde,
 Wherof it is pite to wite
 In the maner as it is write.

Hic in amoris causa
 contra obliviosos po-
 nit confessor exem-
 plum, qualiter De-
 mephon versus bellum
 Trojanum itinerando
 a Phillide Rodopeie
 regina non tantum in
 hospicium, sed etiam
 in amorem gaudio
 magno susceptus est,
 qui postea ab ipsa
 Troie descendens re-
 diturum infra certum
 tempus fidelissime se
 compromisit, sed quia
 huiusmodi promissio-
 nis diem statutum
 postmodum oblitus
 est, Phillis oblivionem
 Demephontis lacri-
 mis primo deplan-
 gens, tandem cordula
 collo suo circumli-
 gata in quodam co-
 rulo pre dolore se
 mortuam suspendit.

King Demephon whan he by ship
 To Troie ward with felaſhip
 Sailend goth upon his wey,
 It hapneth him at Rodepey,
 As Eolus him hadde blowe
 To londe and rested for a throwe.
 And fell that ilke time thus,
 That the doughter of Ligurgus,
 Which quene was of the contre,
 Was sojourned in that citee
 Within a castel nigh the stronde,
 Where Demephon cam up to londe.
 Phillis she hight and of yong age
 And of stature and of visage
 She had all that her best besemeth.
 Of Demephon right wel her quemeth,
 Whan he was come and made him chere.
 And he, that was of his manere
 A lusty knight, ne might asterte,
 That he ne set on her his herte,
 So that within a day or two
 He thought, how ever that it go,

He wolde assaie the fortune
And gan his herte to comune
With goodly wordes in her ere,
And for to put her out of fere
He swore and hath his trouthe plight
To be for ever her owne knight.
And thus with her he stille abode
There, while his ship on anker rode,
And had inough of time and space
To speke of love and seche grace.
This lady herd all that he saide,
And how he swore, and how he praide,
Which was as an enchaument
To here, that was as innocent.
As though it were trouthe and feith
She leveth all, that ever he saith,
And as her in fortune sholde,
She graunteth him all that he wolde.
Thus was he for the time in joie,
Til that he shulde go to Troie,
But tho she made mochel forwe
And he his trouthe laid to borwe
To come and if that he live may
Ayein within a monthe day.
And therupon they kisten bothe,
But were hem leef or were hem lothe,
To ship he goth and forth he went
To Troy, as was his first entent.
The daies go, the monthe passeth,
Her love encrefeth, and his lasseth

For him she leste slepe and mete,
And he his time hath all foryete,
So that this wofull yonge quene,
Which wot nought what it mighte mene,
A letter send and praid him come
And faith how she is overcome
With strengthe of love in suche a wise,
That she nought longe may suffice
To liven out of his presence,
And put upon his conscience
The trouthe, whiche he hath behote,
Wherof she loveth him so hote,
She faith, that if he lenger lette
Of such a day, as she him sette,
She shulde sterven in his flouthe,
Which were a shame unto his trouthe.
This letter is forth upon her sonde,
Wherof somdele comfort on honde
She toke as she, that wolde abide
And waite upon that ilke tide,
Which she hath in her letter write.
But now is pite for to wite,
As he did erst, so he foryate
His time eftsoone and over-fate.
But she, which mighte nought do so,
The tide awaiteth evermo
And cast her eye upon the see.
Somtime nay, sometime ye
Somtime he cam, sometime nought.
Thus she disputeth in her thought

And wot nought what she thenke may.
But fastend all the longe day
She was into the derke night,
And tho she hath do set up light
In a lanterne on high alofte
Upon a toure, where she goth ofte
In hope, that in his comminge
He shulde se the light brenninge,
Wherof he might his weies right
To come, where she was by night.
But all for nought, she was deceived,
For Venus hath her hope weived
And shewed her upon the sky,
How that the day was faste by,
So that within a litel throwe
The daies light she mighte knowe,
Tho she beheld the see at large.
And whan she figh there was no barge
Ne ship, als fer as she may kenne,
Down fro the tour she gan to renne
Into an herber all her owne,
Where many a wonder wofull mone
She made, that no life it wist
As she, which all her joie mist,
That now she swouneth, now she pleigneth,
And all her face she disteigneth
With teres, whiche as of a welle
The stremes from her eyen felle,
So as she might and ever in one
She cleped upon Demephon

And said : Alas, thou flowe wight,
 Where was there ever suche a knight,
 That so through his ungentileffe
 Of flouthe and of foryetelnesse
 Ayein his trouthe brak his steven.
 And tho her eye up to the heaven
 She cast and saide : O thou unkinde,
 Here shalt thou through thy flouthe finde,
 If that the list to come and se
 A lady dede for love of the
 So as I shall my selve spille,
 Whome, if it hadde be thy wille,
 Thou mightest save well inough.
 With that upon a grene bough
 A ceinte of filke, which she there had,
 She knette, and so her self she lad,
 That she about her white swere
 It did and henge her selven there.
 Wherof the goddes were amoved,
 And Demephon was so reproved,
 That of the goddes providence
 Was shappe suche an evidence
 Ever afterward ayein the flowe,
 That Phillis in the same throwe
 Was shappe into a nutte-tre,
 That alle men it mighte se,
 And after Phillis philliberd
 This tre was cleped in the yerd,
 And yet for Demephon to shame
 Into this day it bereth the name.

This wofull chaunce how that it ferde
 Anone as Demephon it herde
 And every man it hadde in speche,
 His sorwe was nought tho to seche,
 He gan his slouth for to banne,
 But it was all to late thanne.

Lo, thus, my sone, might thou wite
 Ayein this vice how it is write,
 For no man may the harmes gesse,
 That fallen through foryetelnesse,
 Wherof that I thy shrift have herd.
 But yet of slouth how it hath ferd
 In other wise I thenke oppose,
 If thou have gilt, as I suppose.

Confessor.

*Dum plantare licet, cultor qui negligit hortum,
 Si defint fructus, imputat ipse sibi.
 Preterit ista dies bona, nec valet illa secunda.
 Hoc caret exemplo lentus amore suo.*

4.

Fulfilled of slouthes exemplaire
 There is yet one his secretaire,
 And he is cleped negligence,
 Which woll nought loke his evidence,
 Wherof he may beware to-fore.
 But whan he hath his cause lore,
 Than is he wise after the honde,
 Whan helpe may no maner bonde,
 Than ate firste wold he binde.
 Thus evermore he stant behinde,
 Whan he the thing may nought amende,
 Than is he ware and saith at ende :

Hic tractat confessor de vicio negligencie, cuius condicio accidiam amplectens omnes artes sciencie tam in amoris causa quam aliter ignominiosa pretermittens, cum nullum poterit eminere remedium, sui ministerii diligenciam ex post facto in vacuum attemptare presumit.

Ha, wolde god I hadde knowe,
 Wherof bejaped with a mowe
 He goth, for whan the grete stede
 Is stole, than he taketh hede
 And maketh the stable-dore fast.
 Thus ever he pleith an after cast
 Of all that he shall say or do.
 He hath a maner eke also,
 Him list nought lerne to be wise,
 For he sette of no vertu prise
 But as him liketh for the while,
 So feleth he ful ofte guile,
 Whan that he weneth fiker to stonde.
 And thus thou might wel understonde,
 My sone, if thou art suche in love
 Thou might nought come at thin above
 Of that thou woldest wel acheve.

Confessio amantis.

Min holy fader, as I leve,
 I may wel with sauf conscience
 Excuse me of negligence
 Towardes love in alle wise.
 For though I be none of the wise,
 I am so truly amorous,
 That I am ever curious
 Of hem, that conne best enforme
 To knowe and witen all the forme,
 What falleth unto loves craft.
 But yet ne fond I nought the haft,
 Which might unto the blade accorde.
 For never herd I men recorde

What thinge it is, that might availe
To winne love withoute faile.
Yet so fer couthe I never finde
Man, that by reson ne by kinde
Me couthe teche fuche an arte,
That he ne failed of a parte.
And as toward min owne wit
Contrive I couthe never yit
To finde any sikerneffe,
That me might other more or lesse
Of love make for to spede.
For leveth wel withouten drede,
If that there were fuche a wey
As certainly as I shall deie
I hadde it lerned longe ago.
But I wot wel there is none so,
And netheles it may wel be
I am so rude in my degre
And eke my wittes ben so dull,
That I ne may nought to the full
Atteigne unto so highe a lore.
But this I dar say overmore,
All though my wit ne be nought stronge,
It is nought on my will alonge,
For that is besy night and day
To lerne all that he lerne may,
How that I mighte love winne.
But yet I am as to beginne
Of that I wolde make an ende,
And for I not, how it shall wende,

That is to me my moſte ſorwe.
 But I dare take god to borwe,
 As after min entendement
 None other wiſe negligent,
 Than I you ſay, have I nought be.
 Forthy pur ſainte charite
 Tell me, my fader, what you ſemeth.

Confellor. In good feith, ſone, wel me quemeth,
 That thou thy ſelf haſt thus acquite
 Toward this vice in which no wit
 Abide may, for in an houre
 He leſt all that he may laboure
 The longe yere, ſo that men ſain,
 What ever he doth it is in vein.
 For through the ſlouth of negligence
 There was yet never ſuch ſcience
 Ne vertue which was bodely,
 That nis deſtruied and loſt therby.
 Enſample, that it hath be ſo,
 In boke I finde write alſo.

Hic contra viciū
 negligencie ponit
 confellor exemplū.
 Et narrat, quod cum
 Pheton filius Solis
 currum patris ſui per
 aera regere debuerat,
 admonitus a patre,
 ut equos ne deviant
 equa manu diligen-
 tius refrenaret, ipſe
 conſilium patris ſua
 negligencia preteri-
 ens, equos cum curru
 nimis baſſe errare per-
 miſit, unde non ſolum
 incendio orbem in-

Phebus, which is the ſonne hote,
 That ſhineth upon erthe hote
 And cauſeth every lives helth,
 He hadde a ſone in all his welth,
 Which Pheton hight, and he deſireth
 And with his moder he conſpireth,
 The which was cleped Clemene,
 For helpe and counſeil, ſo that he
 His faders carte lede might
 Upon the faire daies light.

And for this thing they bothe praide
 Unto the fader, and he saide,
 He wolde wel, but forth with all
 Thre points he bad in speciall
 Unto his sone in alle wise,
 That he him shulde wel avise
 And take it as by wey of lore.
 First was, that he his hors to fore
 Ne prike, and over that he tolde,
 That he the reines faste holde.
 And also that he be right ware,
 In what maner he lede his chare,
 That he mistake nought his gate.
 But upon avisement algate
 He shulde bere a siker eye,
 That he to lowe ne to high
 His carte drive at any throwe,
 Wherof that he might overthrowe.
 And thus by Phebus ordenaunce
 Toke Pheton into governaunce
 The sonnes carte, which he ladde.
 But he such veine gloire hadde
 Of that he was set upon high,
 That he his own estate ne sigh
 Through negligence and toke none hede.
 So might he wel nought longe spede.
 For he the hors withouten lawe
 The carte let aboute drawe
 Where as hem liketh wantonly,
 That ate laste sodeinly,

flammavit, sed et ip-
 sum de curru caden-
 tem in quoddam flu-
 vium demergi ad in-
 teritum causavit.

For he no reson wolde knowe,
 This firy cart he drove to lowe
 And fireth all the worlde aboute,
 Wherof they weren all in doubt
 And to the god for helpe criden
 Of suche unhappes, as betiden.
 Phebus, which figh the negligence,
 How Pheton ayein his defence
 His chare hath drive oute of the wey
 Ordeigneth, that he fel away
 Out of the cart into the flood
 And dreint. Lo now, how it stood
 With him, that was so negligent,
 That fro the highe firmament,
 For that he wolde go to lowe,
 He was anone down overthrowe.
 In high estate it is a vice
 To go to lowe, and in service
 It greveth for to go to high,
 Wherof a tale in poesie

Exemplum super eodem de Icharo Dedali filio in carcere Minotauri existente, cui Dedalus, ut inde evolveret, alas componens firmiter injunxit, ne nimis alte propter solis ardorem ascenderet, quod Icharus sua negligencia postponens cum altius sublimatus fuisset subito ad terram corruens expiravit.

I finde, how whilom Dedalus,
 Whiche hadde a sone and Icharus
 He hight, and though hem thoughte lothe
 In such prison they weren bothe
 With Minotaurus, that aboute
 They mighten no where wenden oute.
 So they begonne for to shape,
 How they the prison might escape.
 This Dedalus, which fro his youthe
 Was taught and many craftes couthe,

Of fethers and of other thinges
Hath made to flee diverse winges
For him and for his sone also,
To whome he yaf in charge tho
And bad him thenke therupon,
How that his winges ben set on
With wex, and if he toke his flight
To high, all sodeinlich he might
Make it to melte with the sonne.
And thus they have her flight begonne
Out of the prison faire and softe.
And whan they weren both alofte,
This Icharus began to mounte
And of the counseil none acompte
He sette whiche his fader taught,
Til that the sonne his winges caught,
Wherof it malt, and fro the hight
Withouten helpe of any flight
He fell to his destruction.
And lich to that condition
There fallen ofte times fele
For lacke of governaunce in wele
Als wel in love as other wey.

Now gode fader, I you prey,
If there be more in this matere
Of slouth, that I might it here.

Amans.

My sone, as for thy diligence,
Whiche every mannes conscience
By reson shulde reule and kepe,
If that the list to take kepe,

Confessor.

38 CONFESSIO AMANTIS.

I wol the tell aboven alle,
In whom no vertu may befallē,
Whiche yiveth unto the vices rest
And is of slouthe the slowest.

5. *Absque labore vagus vir inutilis oia plectens
Nescio quid presens vita valebit ei.
Non amor in tali misero viget, immo valoris
Qui faciunt opera clamat habere suos.*

Hic loquitur confessor super illa specie accidie, que oium dicitur, cuius condicio in virtutum cultura nullius occupationis diligenciam admittens, cuiuscumque expeditionem cause non attingit.

Among these other of slouthes kinde,
Whiche alle labour set behinde,
And hateth alle besinesse,
There is yet one, whiche idelnesse
Is cleped, and is the norice
In mannes kinde of every vice,
Which secheth eses many folde.
In winter doth he nought for colde,
In somer may he nought for hete,
So wether that he frese or fwete,
Or be he in, or be he oute,
He woll ben idel all aboute.
But if he pleie ought at dees,
For who as ever take fees
And thenketh worship to deserve,
There is no lord whome he woll serve
As for to dwelle in his service.
But if it were in suche a wise,
Of that he seeth par aventure,
That by lordship and by coverture
He may the more stonde stille
And use his idelnesse at wille,

For he ne woll no travail take
To ride for his ladies sake,
But liveth all upon his wisshes,
And as a cat wold ete fisshes
Withoute weting of his clees,
So wolde he do, but netheles
He faileth ofte of that he wolde.

My sone, if thou of suche a molde
Art made, now tell me plein thy shrift.

Confessor.

Nay fader, god I yive a yift,
That toward love, as by wit
All idel was I never yit,
Ne never shall, while I may go.

Amans.

Now sone, telle me than so,
What hast thou done of besifhip
To love and to the ladyship
Of her, which thy lady is?

Confessor.

My fader, ever yet er this
In every place, in every stede,
What so my lady hath me bede,
With all min herte obedient,
I have therto be diligent.
And if so is that she bid nought,
What thing that than into my thought
Cometh first, of that I may suffise,
I bowe and profre my service,
Somtime in chambre, somtime in halle
Right so as I se the times falle,
And whan she goth to here masse
That time shall nought overpasse,

Confessio amantis.

That I napproche her ladyhede
 In aunter if I may her lede
 Unto the chapel and ayein,
 Than is nought all my wey in vein.
 Somdele I may the better fare,
 Whan I, that may nought fele her bare,
 May lede her clothed in min arme.
 But afterwarde it doth me harme
 Of pure ymagination,
 For thanne this collation
 I make unto my selven ofte
 And say: Ha lord, how she is softe,
 How she is round, how she is small,
 Now wolde god, I hadde her all
 Withoute daunger at my wille.
 And than I fike and fitte stille,
 Of that I se my besy thought
 Is torned idel into nought.
 But for all that let I ne may,
 Whan I se time another day,
 That I ne do my besinesse
 Unto my ladies worthinesse.
 For I therto my wit affaite
 To se the times and awaite
 What is to done, and what to leve.
 And so whan time is, by her leve
 What thing she bit me don, I do,
 And where she bit me gon, I go,
 And whan her list to clepe, I come.
 Thus hath she fulliche overcome

Min idelneſſe til I ſterve,
So that I mot her nedes ſerve.
For as men ſain, nede hath no lawe,
Thus mot I nedely to her drawe,
I ſerve, I bowe, I loke, I loute,
Min eye folweth her aboute.
What ſo ſhe wolle ſo woll I,
Whan ſhe woll fit, I knele by,
And whan ſhe ſtont, than woll I ſtonde,
And whan ſhe taketh her werk on honde
Of weving or of embrouderie,
Than can I nought but muſe and prie
Upon her fingers longe and ſmale.
And nowe I thenke, and nowe I tale,
And nowe I finge, and nowe I fike,
And thus my contenaunce I pike.
And if it falle, as for a time
Her liketh nought abide byme
But buſien her on other thinges,
Than make I other tarienges
To drecche forth the longe day,
For me is loth departe away.
And than I am ſo ſimple of port,
That for to feigne ſome deſporte
I pleie with her litel hound
Nowe on the bed, nowe on the ground,
Now with the briddes in the cage,
For there is none ſo litel page
Ne yet ſo ſimple a chamberere,
That I ne make hem alle chere,

All for they shulde speke wele.
Thus mow ye se my besy whele,
That goth nought ideliche aboute.
And if her list to riden oute
On pelrinage or other stede,
I come, though I be nought bede,
And take her in min arme alofte
And set her in her sadel softe
And so forth lede her by the bridel,
For that I wolde nought ben idel.
And if her list to ride in chare,
And than I may therof beware,
Anone I shape me to ride
Right even by the chares fide.
And as I may, I speke amonge,
And other while I singe a songe,
Whiche Ovide in his bokes made,
And said : O which forwes glad,
O which wofull prosperite
Belongeth to the proprete
Of love? who so wold him serve,
And yet there fro may no man swerve,
That he ne mot his lawe obey.
And thus I ride forth my wey
And am right besy overall
With herte, and with my body all,
As I have saide you here to-fore.
My gode fader tell therfore
Of idelnesse if I have gilt.

My sone, but thou telle wilt

Ought elles, than I may now here,
 Thou shalt have no penance here.
 And netheles a man may se,
 How now a daies that there be
 Full many of such hertes flowe,
 That woll nought besien hem to knowe
 What thing love is, til ate last,
 That he with strengthe hem overcast
 That malgre hem they mot obey
 And done all idelship away
 To serue wel and besiliche.
 But sone, thou art none of sich,
 For love shall the wel excuse.
 But otherwise if thou refuse
 To love thou might so par cas
 Ben idel, as somtime was
 A kinges doughter unavisid,
 Til that Cupide her hath chastised,
 Wherof thou shalt a tale here
 Accordant unto this matere.

Of Armenie I rede thus,
 There was a king whiche Herupus
 Was hote, and he a lusty maide
 To doughter had, and as men saide
 Her name was Rosiphele,
 Which tho was of great renome.
 For she was bothe wise and faire
 And shulde ben her faders heire.
 But she had o defaulte of slouthe
 Towardes love, and that was routhe.

Hic ponit confessor
 exemplum contra istos,
 qui amoris occupationem
 omittentes, gravioris
 infortunii casus expectant,
 et narrat de quadam
 Armenie regis filia,
 que huiusmodi conditionis
 in principio juventutis
 ociosa persistens, mirabili
 postea visione castigata
 in amoris obsequium
 pre ceteris diligentior
 efficitur.

For so well couthe no man fay,
Which mighte fet her in the way
Of loves occupacion
Through none ymaginacion,
That scole wolde she nought knowe.
And thus she was one of the slowe
As of suche hertes befinesse,
Till whanne Venus the goddesse,
Which loves court hath for to reule,
Hath brought her into better reule
Forth with Cupide, and with his might,
For they merveile of suche a wight,
Which tho was in her lusty age
Defireth nouthen mariage
Ne yet the love of paramours,
Which ever hath ben the comun cours
Amonges hem, that lusty were.
So was it shewed after there.
For he, that highe hertes loweth,
With firy dartes, whiche he throweth
Cupide, whiche of love is god,
In chastifinge hath made a rod
To drive away her wantonneffe,
So that within a while I gesse
She had on suche a chaunce sporned,
That all her mod was overturned,
Which first she had of slowe manere.
For thus it felle, as thou shalt here.

Whan come was the month of may,
She wolde walke upon a day,

And that was er the sonne arift,
Of women but a fewe it wift.
And forth she wente prively
Unto the park was fafte by,
All fofte walkend on the gras,
Till she came there the launde was,
Through which ther ran a great rivere.
It thought her faire and faide : Here
I woll abide under the shawe,
And bad her women to withdrawe
And there she stood alone stille
To thenke what was in her wille.
She figh the fwote floures fpringe,
She herde gladde foules finge,
She figh the beftes in her kinde,
The buck, the doo, the hert, the hinde,
The male go with the femele.
And fo began there a quarele
Betwene love and her owne herte,
Fro which she couthe nought aſterte.
And as she caſt her eye aboute,
She figh clad in one fute a route
Of ladies, where they comen ride
A longe under the wodes fide.
On faire amblende hors they ſet,
That were all white, faire and great,
And everychone ride on fide.
The ſadels were of ſuche a pride
With perle and gold ſo well begone,
So riche figh ſhe never none,

In kirtles and in copes riche
They weren clothed alle aliche
Departed even of white and blewe
With alle lustes, that she knewe,
They were embrouded over all,
Her bodies weren longe and small.
The beaute fair upon her face
It may none erthly thing deface,
Corounes on her hede they bere
As eche of hem a quene were,
That all the golde of Cresus halle
The leste coronall of alle
Ne might have bought after the worth.
Thus comen they ridende forth.
The kinges doughter, which this figh,
For pure abashe drewe her adrigh
And helde her close under a bough
And let hem passen stille inough.
For as her thought in her avise,
To hem that weren of suche a price
She was nought worthy to axen there,
Fro whenne they come, or what they were,
But lever than this worldes good
She wolde have wist how that it stood
And put her hede a litel out,
And as she loked her aboute,
She figh comend under the linde
A woman upon an hors behinde.
The hors, on which she rode, was black,
All lene and galled upon the back

*

And halted, as he were encloied,
Wherof the woman was annoied.
Thus was the hors in fory plight,
But for all that a sterre whit
Amiddes in her front she hadde.
Her fadel eke was wonder badde,
In which the wofull woman sat.
And netheles there was with that
A riche bridel for the nones
Of golde and preciouſe ſtones,
Her cote was ſomdele to-tore,
About her middel twenty ſcore
Of horſe halters and well mo
There hingen ate time tho.
Thus whan ſhe came the lady nigh,
Than toke ſhe better hede and figh
The woman fair was of viſage,
Freſh, luſty, yong and tendre of age.
And ſo this lady, there ſhe ſtood,
Bethought her well and underſtood,
That this, which came ridende tho,
Tidinges couth telle of tho,
Whiche as ſhe figh to-fore ride,
And put her forth and praide abide
And ſaid: Ha fuſter, let me here,
What ben they, that riden now here
And ben ſo richely arraied?
This woman, which came ſo eſmaied,
Anſwerde with full ſofte ſpeche
And ſaid: Madame, I ſhall you teche,

These are of tho, that whilom were
 Servaunts to love and trouthe bere,
 There as they had their hertes sette.
 Fare well, for I may nought be lette.
 Madame, I go to my service,
 So must I haste in alle wise
 Forthy madame, yif me leve.
 I may nought longe with you leve.

Ha, gode suster, yet I prey,
 Tell me, why ye be so besey
 And with these halters thus begone?

Madame, whilom I was one,
 That to my fader hadde a king.
 But I was slowe and for no thing
 Me liste nought to love obey,
 And that I now full fore abey,
 For I whilom no love hadde,
 My hors is now feble and badde
 And all to-tore is min array,
 And every yere this freshe may
 These lusty ladies ride aboute,
 And I must nedes sue her route
 In this maner, as ye now se
 And trusse her halters forth with me
 And am but as her horse knave.
 None other office I ne have,
 Hem thenketh I am worthy no more,
 For I was slowe in loves lore,
 Whan I was able for to lere
 And wolde nought the tales here

Of hem, that couthen love teche.

Now tell me than, I you besече,
Wherof that riche bridel serveth?
With that her chere away she swerveth
And gan to wepe and thus she tolde:
This bridel, which ye now beholde,
So riche upon min horse hed,
Madame, afore er I was dede,
Whan I was in my lusty life,
There fell into min hert a strife
Of love, which me overcome,
So that therafter hede I nome
And thought I wolde love a knight,
That laste well a fourtenight,
For it no lenger mighte laste,
So nigh my life was ate laste.
But nowe alas to late ware
That I ne had him loved ere,
For deth cam so in haste byme,
Er I therto had any time,
That it ne mighte ben acheved.
But for all that I am releved
Of that my will was good therto
That love suffreth it be so,
That I shall such a bridel were.
Nowe have ye herd all min answere,
To god, madame, I you betake,
And warneth alle for my sake,
Of love that they be nought idel
And bid hem thenke upon my bridel.

And with that worde all sodeinly
 She passeth as it were a skie
 All clene out of this ladies fight.
 And tho for fere her herte aflight
 And saide to her self: Helas!

I am right in the same cas.

But if I live after this day,

I shall amende it if I may.

And thus homward this lady went

And chaunged all her first entent

Within her herte and gan to swere,

That she no halters wolde bere.

Confessor. Lo sone, here might thou taken hede,

How idelnesse is for to drede,

Nameliche of love, as I have write.

For thou might understonde and wite,

Among the gentil nacion

Love is an occupacion,

Which for to kepe his lustes save

Shold every gentil herte have,

For as the lady was chastised,

*Non quia sic se
 habet veritas, set
 opinio amancium.* Right so the knight may ben avised,

Which idel is and woll nought serve

To love, he may parcas deserve

A greater peine than she hadde,

Whan she aboute with her ladde

The horse halters, and forthy

Good is to be ware therby.

But for to loke aboven alle

These maidens how so it falle,

They shulden take ensample of this,
Whiche I have tolde forsoth it is.
My lady Venus, whom I serve,
What woman woll her thank deserve
She may nought thilke love eschue
Of paramours, but she mot sue
Cupides lawe, and netheles
Men sene such love selde in pees,
That it nis ever upon asprie
Of jangling and of fals envie,
Full ofte medled with disese.
But thilke love is well at ese,
Which set is upon mariage,
For that dare shewen the visage
In alle places openly.
A great merveile it is forthy,
How that a maiden wolde lette,
That she her time ne besette
To haste unto that ilke feste,
Wherof the love is all honeste.
Men may recover los of good,
But so wise man yet never stood,
Which may recover time ilore.
So may a maiden well therfore
Ensamble take, of that she straungeth
Her love and longe er that she chaungeth
Her herte upon her lustes grene
To mariage, as it is sene.
For thus a yere or two or thre
She leste, er that she wedded be,

While she the charge mighte bere
 Of children, which the world forbere
 Ne may, but if it shulde faile.
 But what maiden that in her spousaile
 Wol tarie, whan she take may,
 She shall perchaunce an other day
 Be let, whan that her levest were,
 Wherof a tale unto her ere,
 Whiche is culpable upon this dede,
 I thenke telle of that I rede.

Hic ponit exemplum
 super eodem et nar-
 rat de filia Jepthe, que
 cum ex sui patris voto
 in holocaustum deo
 occidi et offerri debe-
 ret, ipsa pro eo, quod
 virgo fuisset et prolem
 ad augmentacionem
 populi dei nondum
 genuisset. xl. dierum
 spacium, ut cum suis
 sodalibus virginibus
 suam defleret virgini-
 tatem priusquam mo-
 reretur, in exemplum
 aliorum a patre pos-
 tulavit.

Among the Jewes, as men tolde,
 There was whilom by daies olde
 A noble duke, which Jepthe hight.
 And fell, he shulde go to fight
 Ayein Amon the cruel kinge.
 And for to speke upon this thinge
 Within his herte he made a vow
 To god and said: Ha lorde, if thou
 Wolt graunt unto thy man victoire,
 I shall in token of thy memoire
 The firste life, that I may se,
 Of man or woman, where it be,
 Anone as I come home ayeine,
 To the, which art god soverein,
 Sleen in thy name and sacrifice.
 And thus with his chivalrie
 He goth him forth, so as he sholde,
 And wanne all that he winne wolde
 And overcame his fomen alle.
 May no man lette, that shall falle.

This duke a lusty doughter had,
And fame, which the wordes sprad,
Hath brought unto this ladies ere,
How that her fader hath don there.
She waiteth upon his cominge
With daunsinge and with carolinge
As she, that wolde be to-fore
All other, and so she was therfore
In Masphat at her faders gate
The first, and whan he cam ther at
And sigh his doughter, he to-braide
His clothes and wepend he saide :

O mighty god among us here,
Now wot I that in no manere
This worldes joie may be pleine.
I had all that I couthe faine
Ayein my fomen by thy grace,
So whan I came toward this place
There was no gladder man than I.
But now, my lorde, all sodeinly
My joie is torned into sorwe,
For I my doughter shall to morwe
To-hewe and brenne in thy service
To loenge of thy sacrifice
Through min avowe, so as it is.
The maiden, whan she wist of this
And sigh the sorwe her fader made,
So as she may with wordes glade
Comforted him and bad him holde
His covenaut, which he is beholde

Towards god, as he behight.
But netheles her herte aflight
Of that she sigh her deth comende,
And than unto the grounde knelende
To-fore her fader she is falle
And saith, so as it is befalle
Upon this point, that she shall deie,
Of o thing first she wolde him prey,
That forty daies of respite
He wolde her graunt upon this plight,
That she the while may bewepe
Her maidenhede, which she to kepe
So longe hath had, and nought be set
Wherof her lusty youth is let,
That she no children hath forth drawe
In mariage after the lawe,
So that the people is nought encrefed,
But that it mighte be relefed,
That she her time hath lore so,
She wolde by his leve go
With other maidens to compleigne
And afterward unto the peine
Of deth she wolde come ayein.
The fader herde his doughter sain,
And therupon of one assent
The maidens weren anone assent,
That shulden with this maiden wende.
So for to speke unto this ende
They gone the downes and the dales
With weping and with wofull tales,

And every wight her maidenhede
Compleigneth upon thilke nede,
That she no children hadde bore,
Wherof she hath her youthe lore,
Which never she recover may.
For so fell, that her laste day
Was come, in which she shulde take
Her deth, which she may nought forsake.
Lo, thus she deiede a wofull maide
For thilke cause, which I faide,
As thou hast understonde above.

My fader, as toward the love
Of maidens for to telle trouthe,
Ye have thilke vice of slouth
Me thenketh right wonder wel declared,
That ye the women have nought spared
Of hem that tarien so behinde.
But yet it falleth in my minde
Toward the men, how that ye speke
Of hem that woll no travail seke
In cause of love upon deserte
To speke in wordes so coverte,
I not what travail that ye ment.

Amans.

My sone, and after min entent
I woll the telle, what I thought,
How whilom men her loves bought
Through great travaile in straunge londes,
Where that they wroughten with her hondes
Of armes many a worthy dede
In sondry places, as men may rede.

Confessor.

6. *Quem probat armorum probitas Venus approbat, et quem
Torpor habet reprobum reprobat illa virum.
Vecors segnicies insignia nescit amoris,
Nam piger ad bravium tardius ipse venit.*

Hic loquitur, quod
in amoris causa mi-
licie probitas ad ar-
morum laboris ex-
ercicium nullate-
nus torpescat.

That every love of pure kinde
Is first forth drawe, well I finde.
But nethelss yet over this
Deserte doth so, that it is
The rather had in many place.
Forthy who secheth loves grace,
Where that these worthy women are,
He may nought than him selve spare
Upon his travail for to serve,
Wherof that he may thank deserve,
Where as these men of armes be
Sometime over the grete see,
So that by londe and eke by ship
He mot travaile for worship
And make many hastif rodes,
Somtime in Pruse, somtime in Rodes
And some time into Tartarie,
So that these heralds on him crie :
Vailant, vailant, lo, where he goth.
And than he yiveth hem golde and cloth,
So that his fame mighte springe
And to his ladies ere bringe
Some tiding of his worthinesse,
So that she might of his prowesse
Of that she herde men recorde
The better unto his love accorde
And daunger put out of her mood,
Whan alle men recorden good,

And that she wot well for her sake,
That he no travail woll forsake.

My sone, of this travaile I mene
Now shrif the, for it shall be sene,
If thou art idel in this cas.

Confessor.

My fader ye, and ever was
For as me thenketh truely,
That every man doth more than I
As of this point, and if so is,
That I have ought so done er this,
It is so litel of accompt,
As who saith it may nought amount
To winne of love his lusty yifte.
For this I telle you in shrifte,
That me were lever her love winne
Than Kaire and all that is therinne.
And for to flee the hethen alle
I not what good there mighte falle,
So mochel blood though ther be shad.
This finde I writen how Crist bad,
That no man other shulde flee.
What shulde I winne over the see,
If I my lady lost at home?
But passe they the salte some,
To whom Crist bad they shulden preche
To all the world and his feith teche.
But now they rucken in her nest
And resten as hem liketh best
In all the swetenesse of delices.
Thus they defenden us the vices

Confessio amantis.

And fit hem selven all amidde,
 To flee and fighten they us bidde
 Hem whom they shuld, as the boke saith,
 Converte[n] unto Cristes feith.
 But herof have I great merveile,
 How they wol bidde me traveile.
 A Sarazin if I flee shall,
 I flee the soule forth withall,
 And that was never Cristes lore.
 But now ho there, I say no more.
 But I woll speke upon my shrifte
 And to Cupide I make a yifte,
 That who as ever pris deserve
 Of armes I wol love serve,
 As though I shuld hem bothe kepe,
 Als well yet wolde I take kepe,
 Whan it were time to abide
 And for to travaile and for to ride,
 For how as ever a man laboure,
 Cupide appointed hath his houre.

Hic allegat amans
 in sui excusacio-
 nem, qualiter A-
 chilles apud Tro-
 jam propter amo-
 rem Polixene arma
 sua per aliquod
 tempus dimisit.

For I have herde tell also,
 Achilles left his armes so
 Both of him self and of his men
 At Troie for Polixenen
 Upon her love whan he felle,
 That for no chaunce that befelle
 Among the Grekes or up or down
 He wolde nought ayein the town
 Ben armed for the love of her.
 And so me thenketh, leve sir,

A man of armes may him reſte
Somtime in hope for the beſte,
If he may finde a werre ner,
What ſhulde I thanne go ſo fer
In ſtraunge londes many a mile
To ride and leſe at home there while
My love, it were a ſhort beyete
To winne chaffe and leſe whete.
But if my lady bide wolde,
That I for her love ſholde
Travail, me thenketh truely,
I mighte flee through out the ſky
And go through out the depe ſee,
For all ne ſette I at a ſtre,
What thank that I might elles gete.
What helpeth a man have mete,
Where drinke lacketh on the borde,
What helpeth any mannes worde
To ſay howe I travaile faſte,
Where as me faileth ate laſte
That thing, whiche I travaile fore.
O in good time were he bore,
That might atteigne ſuche a mede.
But certes if I mighte ſpede
With any maner beſineſſe,
Of worldes travail than I geſſe
There ſhulde me none idelſhip
Departen from her ladyſhip.
But this I ſe on daies now,
The blinde god I wot nought how

Cupido, which of love is lorde,
He set the thinges in discorde,
That they that lest to love entende
Full ofte he woll hem yive and fende
Most of his grace, and thus I finde,
That he that sholde go behinde,
Goth many a time fer to-fore.
So wote I nought right well therfore,
On whether bord that I shall faile.
Thus can I nought my self counseile,
But all I set on aventure
And am, as who faith, out of cure
For ought that I can say or do,
For evermore I finde it so,
The more besinesse I lay,
The more that I knele and pray
With gode wordes and with softe,
The more I am refused ofte
With besinesse and may nought winne,
And in good feith that is great sinne.
For I may say of dede and thought,
That idel man have I be nought,
For how as ever that I be deflaied,
Yet evermore I have assaied.
But though my besinesse laste,
All is but idel ate laste,
For whan theeffect is idelnesse,
I not what thing is besinesse.
Say what availeth all the dede,
Which nothing helpeth ate nede?

For the fortune of every fame
Shall of his ende bere a name.
And thus for ought is yet befallē,
An idel man I woll me calle
As after min entendement.
But upon your amendement,
Min holy fader, as you semeth
My refon and my cause demeth.

My sone, I have herde of thy matere, Confessor.
Of that thou hast the shruven here.
And for to speke of idel fare
Me semeth that thou tharst nought care,
But only that thou might nought spede.
And therof, sone, I woll the rede,
Abide and haste nought to faste,
Thy dedes ben every day to caste,
Thou nost, what chaunce shall betide.
Better is to waite upon the tide
Than rowe ayein the stremes stronge.
For though so be the thenketh longe,
Parcas the revolucion
Of heven and thy condicion
Ne be nought yet of one accorde.
But I dare make this recorde
To Venus, whose prest that I am,
That fithen that I hider cam
To here, as she me bad, thy life,
Wherof thou elles be giltife,
Thou might herof thy conscience
Excuse and of great diligence,

Which thou to love hast so dispended,
 Thou oughtest wel to be comended.
 But if so be that there ought faile
 Of that thou sloutheft to travaile
 In armes for to ben absent,
 And for thou makest an argument
 Of that thou saidest here above,
 How Achilles through strength of love
 His armes leste for a throwe,
 Thou shalt an other tale knowe,
 Whiche is contrarie, as thou shalt wite.
 For this a man may finde write,
 Whan that knighthode shall be werred,
 Lust may nought thanne be preferred,
 The bed mot thanne be forsake
 And shield and spere on honde take,
 Which thing shall make hem after glad,
 Whan they be worthy knightes made,
 Wherof, so as it cometh to honde,
 A tale thou shalt understonde,
 How that a knight shall armes sue,
 And for the while his ese eschue.

Hic dicit, quod amoris delectamento postposito miles arma sua preferre debet, et ponit exemplum de Ulixes, cum ipse a bello Trojano propter amorem Penelope remanere domi voluisset, Nanplus pater Palamedis cum tantis sermonibus allocutus est, quod Ulixes thoro sue conjugis relicto

Upon knighthode I rede thus,
 How whilom whan the king Nanplus,
 The fader of Palamides,
 Came for to preien Ulixes
 With other Gregois eke also,
 That he with hem to Troie go,
 Where that the sieg shulde be,
 Anone upon Penelope,

His wife, whom that he loveth hote,
Thenkend, wolde hem nought behote.
But he shope than a wonder wile,
How that he shulde hem best beguile,
So that he mighte dwelle stille
At home and weld his love at wille,
Wherof erly the morwe day
Out of his bed, where that he lay,
Whan he was up, he gan to fare
Into the felde and loke and stare
As he, which feigneth to be wode,
He toke a plough, where that it stood,
Wherin anone in stede of oxes
He let do yoken grete foxes
And with great salt the londe he sewe.
But Nanplus, which the cause knewe,
Ayein the sleighte, which he feigneth,
Another sleight anone ordeigneth.
And fell that time Ulixes hadde
A child to sone, and Nanplus radde,
How men that sone take sholde
And setten him upon the molde,
Where that his fader held the plough
In thilke furgh, which he tho drough.
For in such wise he thought assay,
Howe it Ulixes shulde pay,
If that he were wode or none.
The knightes for this child forth gone,
Telemacus anone was fette
To-fore the plough and even sette,

labores armorum una
cum aliis Troie mag-
nanimis subibat.

Where that his fader shulde drive,
 But whan he sigh his childe as blive,
 He drof the plough out of the way,
 And Nanplus tho began to say
 And hath half in a jape cried :

• O Ulixes, thou art aspied,
 What is all this thou woldest mene ?
 For openlich it is now sene,
 That thou hast feigned all this thing,
 Which is great shame to a king,
 Whan that for lust of any slouthe
 Thou wolt in a quarel of trouthe
 Of armes thilke honour forsake
 And dwelle at home for loves sake.
 For better it were honour to winne
 Than love, which likinge is inne.
 Forthy take worship upon honde
 And elles thou shalt understonde
 These other worthy kinges alle
 Of Grece, which unto the calle,
 Towardes the wol be right wroth
 And greve the par chaunce both,
 Which shall be to the double shame
 Most for the hindringe of thy name,
 That thou for slouthe of any love
 Shalt so thy lustes set above
 And leve of armes the knighthode,
 Whiche is the prise of thy manhode
 And oughte first to be desired.

But he, which had his herte fired,

Upon his wife, whan he this herd,
 Nought o word there ayein answerd,
 But torneth home halving ashamed
 And hath within him self so tamed
 His herte, that all the sotie
 Of love for chivalrie
 He leste, and be him leef or loth
 To Troie with hem forth he goth,
 That he him mighte nought excuse.
 Thus stant it, if a knight refuse
 The lust of armes to travaile.
 There may no worldes ese availe,
 But if worshipec be with all.
 And that hath shewed overall,
 For it fit wel in alle wise
 A knight to ben of high emprise
 And putten alle drede away,
 For in this wise I have herd say,

The worthy knight Prothesalay
 On his passage where he lay
 Towardes Troie thilke siege
 She which was all his owne liege
 Laodomie his lusty wife,
 Which for his love was pensife
 As he whiche all her herte hadde,
 Upon a thing, wherof she dradde,
 A letter for to make him dwelle
 Fro Troie, send him thus to telle,
 How she hath axed of the wise
 Touchend of him in suche a wise,

Hic narrat super
 eodem, qualiter
 Laodomia regis
 Prothesalayi uxor
 volens ipsum a bello
 Troiano secum
 retinere fatalem
 sibi mortem in por-
 tu Troie prenun-
 ciavit, sed ipse mili-
 ciam potius quam
 ociam affectans,
 Troiam adiit, ubi
 sue mortis precio
 perpetue laudis
 cronicam ademit.

That they have done her understonde
 Towardes other how so it stonde,
 The destine it hath so shape,
 That he shall nought the deth escape
 In cas that he arrive at Troy.
 Forthy as to her worldes joy
 With all her herte she him preide
 And many another cause alleide,
 That he with her at home abide.
 But he hath cast her letter aside
 As he, which tho no maner hede
 Toke of her wommanische drede
 And forth he goth, as nought ne were,
 To Troy, and was the firste there,
 Which londeth and toke arrivaile,
 For him was lever in the bataile
 He saith to deien as a knight
 Than for to live in all his might
 And be reproved of his name.
 Lo, thus upon the worldes fame
 Knighthode hath ever yet beset,
 Which with no cowardis is let.

Adhuc super eodem, qualiter rex Saul, non obstante quod Samuelem a Phitonissa fuscitatum et conjuratum responsum, quod ipse in bello moretur, accepisset, hostes tamen suos aggrediens milicie famam cunctis huius vite blandimentis preposuit.

Of kinge Saul also I finde,
 Whan Samuel out of his kinde,
 Through that the Phitoneffe hath lered,
 In Samarie was arered
 Long time after that he was dede.
 The kinge Saul him axeth rede,
 If that he shall go fight or none.
 And Samuel him said anone :

The firste day of the bataile
 Thou shalt be slain withoute faile
 And Jonathas thy sone also.
 But how as ever it felle so,
 This worthy knight of his corage
 Hath undertake the viage
 And wolde nought his knighthode let.
 For no perill he couthe set,
 Wherof that bothe his sone and he
 Upon the mounte of Gelboe
 Assembled with her enemies.
 For they knighthode of such a pris
 By olde daies thanne helden,
 That they none other thing behelden.
 And thus the fader for worship
 Forth with his sone of felaship
 Through lust of armes weren dede
 As men may in the bible rede,
 They whos knighthode is yet in minde
 And shall be to the worldes ende.

And for to loken overmore
 It hath and shall ben evermore,
 That of knighthode the prowesse
 Is grounded upon hardieffe
 Of him that dare wel undertake.
 And who that wolde ensample take
 Upon the forme of knightes lawe,
 How that Achilles was forth drawe
 With Chiro, which Centaurus hight,
 Of many a wonder here he might.

Hic loquitur, quod miles in suis primordiis ad audaciam provocari debet. Et narrat, qualiter Chiro centaurus Achillem, qui secum ab infancia in monte Peleon educavit, ut audax efficeretur, primum edocuit, quod cum ipse venacionibus ibidem insisteret, leones et tigrides huiusmodique animalia sibi resistencia et nulla alia fugitiva agitare, et sic Achilles in juven-

tute animatus famo-
sissime milicie probi-
tatem postmodum ad-
optavit.

For it stood thilke time thus,
That this Chiro this Centaurus
Within a large wilder nesse,
Where was leon and leone sse,
The lepard and the tigre also
With hert and hinde, buk and doo,
Had his dwelling, as tho befell.
Of Peleon upon the hill,
Wherof was thanne mochel speche,
There hath Chiro this child to teche,
What time he was of twelve yere age,
Wherfore to maken his corage
The more hardy by other wey.
In the forest to hunt and pley
Whan that Achilles walke wolde,
Centaurus bad that he ne sholde
After no beste make his chas,
Which wolde fleen out of his place
As buk and doo and hert and hinde,
With which he may no werre finde.
But tho, that wolden him withstonde,
There shuld he with his dart on honde
Upon the tigre and the leon
Purchase and make his venison,
As to a knight is accordaunt.
And therupon a covenaint
This Chiro with Achilles set,
That every day withouten let
He shulde such a cruel beste
Or fle or wounden ate leste,

So that he might a token bring
 Of blood upon his home coming.
 And thus of that Chiro him taught
 Achilles such an herte caught,
 That he no more a leon drad,
 Whan he his dart on honde had,
 Than if a leon were an asse.
 And that hath made him for to passe
 All other knightes of his dede,
 Whan it cam the grete nede,
 As it was afterward wel knowe.

Lo, thus, my sone, thou might knowe Confessor.
 That the corage of hardieffe
 Is of knighthode the prowesse,
 Which is to love suffisaunt
 Aboven all the remenaunt,
 That unto loves court pursue.
 But who that wol no slouth eschue
 Upon knighthode and nought travaile,
 I not what love him shuld availe,
 But every labour axeth why
 Of some reward, wherof that I
 Ensamples couthe tel inough
 Of hem, that toward love drough
 By olde daies, as they shulde.

My fader, therof here I wolde.

Amans.

My sone, it is wel resonable
 In place, which is honourable,
 If that a man his herte sette,
 That than he for no slouthe lette

Confessor.

To do what longeth to manhede.
 For if thou wolt the bokes rede
 Of Launcelot and other mo,
 There might thou seen, how it was tho
 Of armes, for they wold atteigne
 To love, which withouten peine
 May nought be get of idelnesse.
 And that I take to witnesse
 An old cronique in speciall,
 The whiche into memoriall
 Is write for his loves sake,
 How that a knight shal undertake.

Hic dicit, quod miles
 priusquam amoris
 amplexu dignus effi-
 ciatur, eventus belli-
 cos victoriosus am-
 plectere debet, et nar-
 rat, qualiter Hercules
 et Achelous propter
 Deianiram Calidonie
 regis filiam singulare
 duellum adinvicem
 inierunt, cuius victor
 Hercules existens ar-
 morum meritis amo-
 rem virginis laudabi-
 liter conquestavit.

Ther was a king, which Oenes
 Was hote and he under pees
 Held Calidoine in his empire
 And had a doughter Deianire.
 Men wist in thilke time none
 So fair a wight, as she was one.
 And as she was a lusty wight,
 Right so was than a noble knight,
 To whom Mercurie fader was.
 This knight the two pillers of bras,
 The whiche yet a man may finde,
 Set up in the desert of Ynde,
 That was the worthy Hercules,
 Whos name shall be endeles
 For the merveiles, which he wrought.
 This Hercules the love fought
 Of Deianire, and of his thing
 Unto her fader, which was king,

He spake touchend of mariage.
The kinge knowend his high lignage
And drad also his mightes sterne
To him ne durst his doughter werne
And netheles, this he him saide,
How Achelous er he first preide
To wedden her, and in accorde
They stood, as it was of recorde.
But for all that this he him graunteth,
That which of hem that other daunteth
In armes, him she shulde take,
And that the king hath undertake.
This Achelous was a geaunt,
A subtil man, a deceivaunt,
Which through magique and forcerie
Couth all the worlde of trecherie.
And whan that he this tale herde,
How upon that the king answerde,
With Hercules he muste feight,
He trusteth nought upon his sleight
Al onely, whan it cometh to nede,
But that, which voideth alle drede
And every noble herte stereth,
The love, that no life forbereth,
For his lady, whom he desireth,
With hardieffe his herte fireth,
And fend him word withoute faile,
That he woll take the bataile.
They fetten day, they chofen felde,
The knightes covered under shelde

To-gider come at time sette
And eche one is with other mette.
It fel they foughten both on foot,
There was no stone, there was no root,
Which mighte letten hem the wey,
But all was voide and take away.
They smiten strokes but a few,
For Hercules, which wolde shewe
His grete strengthe as for the nones,
He stert upon him all at ones
And caught him in his armes stronge.
This geaunt wote, he may nought longe
Endure under so harde bondes,
And thought he wold out of his hondes
By sleight in some maner escape.
And as he couthe him self forshape,
In likenesse of an adder he slipte
Out of his honde and forth he skipte
And este, as he that fighte wolle,
He torneth him into a bolle
And gan to belwe in fuche a founne,
As though the world shuld al go doune.
The grounde he sporneth and he traunceth,
His large hornes he avaunceth
And cast hem here and there aboute.
But he, which stant of hem no doubte,
Awaiteth wel whan that he cam
And him by bothe hornes nam
And all at ones he him caste
Unto the grounde and helde him faste,

That he ne mighte with no sleight
 Out of his hond get upon height,
 Till he was overcome and yolde,
 And Hercules hath what he wolde.
 The kinge him graunteth to fulfille
 His axing at his owne wille.
 And she, for whom he hadde served,
 Her thought he hath her wel deserved.
 And thus with great desert of armes
 He wan him for to ligge in armes
 As he, which hath it dere abought,
 For otherwise shuld he nought.

And over this if thou wol here
 Upon knighthode of this matere,
 How love and armes ben acquainted,
 A man may se both write and peinted
 So ferforth, that Pentafilee,
 Which was the quene of Feminee,
 The love of Hector for to seke
 And for honour of armes eke
 To Troie cam with spere and shelde
 And rode her self into the felde
 With maidens armed all aroute
 In rescouffe of the town aboute,
 Which with the Gregois was belein.

Fro Paflagoine as men sein,
 Which stant upon the worldes ende,
 That time it liked eke to wende
 Philemenis, which was kinge,
 To Troie, and came upon this thinge

Nota de Pentafilea
 Amazonie regina,
 que Hectoris amore
 colligata contra
 Pirrum Achillis fi-
 lium apud Trojam
 arma ferre etiam
 personaliter non re-
 cufavit.

Nota, qualiter Phi-
 lemenis propter
 milicie famam a
 finibus terre in de-
 fensionem Troie
 veniens tres puel-
 las a regno Amazo-
 nie quolibet anno

percipiendas sibi et
heredibus suis im-
perpetuum ea de
causa habere pro-
meruit.

In helpe of thilke noble town,
And all was that for the renoun
Of worship and of worldes fame,
Of whiche he wolde bere a name.
And so he did and forth with all
He wan of love in speciall
A fair tribut for evermo.
For it fell thilke time so,
Pirrus the sone of Achilles
This worthy quene among the pres,
With dedely swerd fought out and fonde
And slough her with his owne honde,
Wherof this king of Passagoine
Pentafilee of Amazoine,
Where she was quene, with him ladde
With suche maidens as she hadde
Of hem that were left alive
Forth in his ship, til they arrive,
Where that the body was begrave
With worship, and the women save.
And for the goodship of this dede
They graunten him a lusty mede,
That every yere for his truage
To him and to his heritage
Of maidens fair he shall have thre.
And in this wise spedde he,
Which the fortune of armes sought,
With his travaile his ese he bought,
For other wise he shulde have failed,
If that he hadde nought travailed.

Eneas eke within Itaile
 Ne had he wonne the bataile
 And done his might so befily
 Ayein king Turne his enemy,
 He hadde nought Lavine wonne,
 But for he hath him over ronne
 And gete his pris, he gat her love.

By these ensamples here above
 Lo, now my sone, as I have told,
 Thou might wel se, who that is bold
 And bar travaile and undertake
 The cause of love, he shall be take
 The rather unto loves grace,
 For comunliche in worthy place
 The women loven worthinesse
 Of manhode and of gentilesse,
 For the gentils ben most desired.

My fader, but I were enspired
 Through lore of you, I wot no way,
 What gentilesse is for to say,
 Wherof to telle I you besече.

The ground, my sone, for to seche
 Upon this diffinicion
 The worldes constitucion
 Hath set the name of gentilesse
 Upon the fortune of richesse,
 Which of long time is falle in age.
 Than is a man of high lignage
 After the forme as thou might here,
 But no thing after the matere.

Nota pro eo, quod
 Eneas regem Tur-
 num in bello devi-
 cit, non solum amo-
 rem Lavine, sed et
 regnum Italie sibi
 subjugatum obti-
 nuit.

Amans.
 Hic dicit, quod
 generosi in amoris
 causa sepius prefer-
 vantur, super quo
 querit amans, quid
 sit generositas, cui-
 us veritatem ques-
 tionis confessor per
 singula dissolvit.
 Confessor.

For who that reson understond
Upon richesse it may nought stond,
For that is thing, which faileth ofte.
For he that stant to day alofte
And all the worlde hath in his wones,
To morwe he falleth all at ones
Out of richesse into pouerte,
So that therof is no deserte,
Which gentileffe maketh abide.
And for to loke on other side
How that a gentilman is bore,
Adam, whiche alle was to-fore
With Eve his wife, as of hem two,
All was aliche gentil tho,
So that of generacion
To make declaracion,
There may no gentileffe be.
For to the reson if we se
Of mannes birthe the mesure,
It is so comun to nature,
That it yiveth every man aliche,
As well to the pouer as to the riche,
For naked they ben bore bothe,
The lorde hath no more for to clothe
As of him self that ilke throwe,
Than hath the pouerest of the rowe.
And whan they shullen bothe passe,
I not of hem whiche hath the lasse
Of worldes good, but as of charge
The lorde is more for to charge,

Whan god shall his accompte here,
For he hath had his lustes here.
But of the body, which shall deie,
All though there be diuerse wey
To deth, yet is there but one ende,
To which that every man shall wende
As well the begger as the lorde
Of o nature, of one accorde.
She, which our olde moder is,
The erthe bothe that and this
Receiveth and alich devoureth,
That she to nouthur part favoureth.
So wote I nothing after kinde,
Where I may gentileffe finde,
For lacke of vertue lacketh grace,
Wherof richesse in many place,
Whan men best wene for to stonde,
All sodeinly goth out of honde.
But vertue set in the corage,
There may no world be so salvage,
Which might it take and done away,
Till whanne that the body deie.
And than he shall be riched so,
That it may faile nevermo,
So that may well be gentileffe,
Which yiveth so great a fikerneffe,
For after the condicion
Of resonable entencion,
The which out of the soule groweth
And the vertue fro vice knoweth,

Omnes quidem ad
unum tendimus,
sed diverso tramite.

Wherof a man the vice eschueth
Withoute flouth and vertue fueth,
That is a verray gentilman
And nothing elles, whiche he can,
Ne which he hath, ne which he may.
But for all that yet now a day
In loves court to taken hede,
The pouer vertue shall nought spede,
Where that the riche vice woweth.
For selde it is, that love alloweth
The gentil man withouten good,
Though his condition be good.
But if a man of bothe two
Be riche and vertuous also,
Than is he well the more worth.
But yet to put him selve forth
He must done his besinesse,
For nouthur good ne gentileffe
May helpen hem, whiche idel be.
But who, that woll in his degre
Travaile so, as it belongeth,
It happeth ofte, that he fongeth
Worship and ese bothe two.
For ever yet it hath be so,
That love honest in sondry wey
Profiteth, for it doth away
The vice, and as the bokes fain,
It maketh curteis of the villain
And to the coward hardieffe
It yiveth, so that the verray prowesse

Is caused upon loves reule
 To him that can manhode reule,
 And eke toward the womanhede,
 Who that therof woll taken hede.
 For they the better affaited be
 In every thinge, as men may se,
 For love hath ever his lustes grene
 In gentil folke, as it is sene,
 Which thing there may no kind areste.
 I trowe, that there is no beste,
 If he with love shulde acquaintance,
 That he ne wolde make it queint
 As for the while, that it laste.
 And thus I conclude ate laste,
 That they ben idel, as me semeth,
 Whiche unto thing, that love demeth,
 Forslouthen, that they shulden do,
 And over this, my sone, also
 After the vertue morall eke
 To speke of love, if I shall seke,
 Among the holy bokes wise,
 I finde write in suche a wise
 Who loveth nought is here as dede,
 For love above all other is hede,
 Whiche hath the vertues for to lede,
 Of all that unto mannes dede
 Belongeth. For of idelship
 He hateth all the felaship,
 For slouthe is ever to despise,
 Whiche in disdeigne hath all apprise,

Nota de amore
 charitatis, ubi di-
 cit, qui non diligit,
 manet in morte.

And that accordeth nought to man.
 For he that wit and reson can,
 It fit him wel, that he travaile
 Upon such thing, which might availe,
 For idelship is nought comended,
 But every law it hath defended.
 And in ensample thereupon
 The noble wise Salomon,
 Whiche had of every thinge insight,
 Saith: As the briddes to the flight
 Ben made, so the man is bore
 To labour, whiche is nought forbore
 To hem, that thenken for to thrive.
 For we, whiche are nowe alive,
 Of hem that besy whilom were
 Als wel in scole as elles where
 Now every day ensample take,
 That if it were now to make
 Thing, which that they first founden out,
 It sholde nought be brought about.
 Her lives thanne were longe,
 Her wittes great, her mightes stronge,
 Her hertes full of besinesse,
 Wherof the worldes redinesse
 In body both and in corage
 Stant ever upon his avauntage.
 And for to drawe into memoire
 Her names both and her hystoie,
 Upon the vertu of her dede
 In sondry bokes thou might rede.

Apostolus. Que-
 cumque scripta
 sunt ad nostram
 doctrinam scripta
 sunt.

*Expedit de manibus labor, ut de cotidianis
 Actibus ac vita vivere possit homo.
 Sed qui doctrine causa fert mente labores
 Prevalet et merita perpetuata parat.*

7.

Of every wisdom the parfit
 The highe god of his spirit
 Yaf to men in erthe here
 Upon the forme and the matere,
 Of that he wolde make hem wise.
 And thus cam in the first apprise
 Of bokes and of alle good
 Through hem, that whilom understood
 The lore, which to hem was yive,
 Wherof these other, that now live,
 Ben every day to lerne new.
 But er the time that men sue
 And that the labour forth it brought,
 There was no corn, though men it sought,
 In none of all the feldes oute.
 And er the wisdom cam aboute
 Of hem, that first the bokes write,
 This may wel every wise man wite,
 There was great labour eke also.
 Thus was none idel of the two,
 That one the plough hath undertake
 With labour, which the hond hath take,
 That other toke to studie and muse
 As he which wolde nought refuse
 The labour of his wittes alle.
 And in this wise it is befalle
 Of labour, which that they begonne,
 We be now taught of that we conne,

Hic loquitur contra
 ociosos quoscumque,
 et maxime contra istos,
 qui excellentis
 prudentie ingenium
 habentes absque fructu
 operum torpescunt.
 Et ponit exemplum
 de diligencia predecessorum,
 qui ad totius humani generis
 doctrinam et auxilium
 suis continuis laboribus
 et studiis gracia
 mediante divina
 artes et sciencias
 primitus invenerunt.

Her befinesse is yet to sene,
 That it stant ever aliche grene,
 All be it so the body deie,
 The name of hem shall never away.
 In the cronique as I finde
 Cham, whos labour is yet in minde,
 Was he, which first the letters fonde
 And wrote in Hebreu with his honde,
 Of natural philosophy
 He found first also the clergy.
 Cadmus the letters of Gregois
 First made upon his owne chois.
 Theges of thing, which shal befall,
 He was the first augure of alle.
 And Philemon by the visage
 Found to describe the corage.
 Claudius, Esdras and Sulpices,
 Termegis, Pandulf and Frigidilles,
 Menander, Ephiloquorus,
 Solins, Pandas and Josephus
 The firste were of enditours
 Of old cronique and eke auctours.
 And Herodot in his science
 Of metre, of rime and of cadence
 The firste was of which men note.
 And of musique also the note
 In mannes voise or softe or sharpe
 That founde Jubal. And of the harpe
 The mery soune, whiche is to like,
 That founde Paulius forth with phisique.

Zeuzis found first the portreture,
And Prometheus the sculpture,
After what forme that hem thought
The resemblance anon they wrought.
Tubal in iron and in stele
Found first the forge and wrought it wele,
And Jadahel, as faith the boke,
First made nette and fishes toke.
Of hunting eke he found the chace,
Which now is knowe in many place,
A tent of cloth with corde and stake
He set up first and did it make.
Berconius of cokerie
First made the delicacie.
The craft Minerve of wolfe fonde
And made cloth her owne honde.
And Delbora made it of line,
The women were of great engine.
But thing which yiveth us mete and drinke
And doth the labour for to swinke
To till the londes and set the vines,
Wherof the cornes and the wines
Ben sustenance to mankinde,
In olde bokes as I finde,
Saturnus of his owne wit
Hath founde first, and more yit
Of chapmenhode he found the wey
And eke to coigne the money
Of fondry metal, as it is
He was the firste man of this.

But how that metal cam a place
Through mannes wit and goddes grace
The route of philosophres wise
Contreveden by sondry wise,
First for to get it out of mine
And after for to trie and fine.
And also with great diligence
They founde thilke experience,
Which cleped is alconomy,
Wherof the silver multiply
They made and eke the golde also.
And for to telle howe it is so,
Of bodies seven in speciall
With foure spirits joint withall
Stant the substance of this matere.
The bodies, whiche I speke of here,
Of the planettes ben begonne.
The golde is titled to the sonne,
The mone of silver hath his part,
And iron that stond upon Mart,
The leed after Satorne groweth,
And Jupiter the brasse bestoweth,
The copper set is to Venus,
And to his part Mercurius
Hath the quick silver, as it falleth,
The whiche after the boke it calleth
Is first of thilke foure named
Of spirites, which ben proclaimed.
And the spirit, whiche is secounde
In sal armoniak is founde.

The thridde spirit sulphur is,
The forth suende after this
Arcennicum by name is hote.
With blowing and with fires hote
In these thinges, whiche I say,
They worchen by diverse way.
For as the philosophre tolde,
Of golde and silver they ben holde
Two principal extremities,
To whiche all other by degrees
Of the metalles ben accordaunt.
And so through kinde resemblaunt,
That what man couthe awaie take
The rust, of which they waxen blacke,
And the favour of the hardnesse,
They shulden take the likenesse
Of golde or silver parfitly.
But for to worche it fikerly
Betwene the corps and the spirit,
Er that the metall be parfit,
In seven formes it is set
Of all. And if that one be let,
The remenaunt may nought availe,
But other wise it may nought faile.
For they, by whom this art was founde,
To every point a certain bounde
Ordeignen, that a man may finde
This craft is wrought by wey of kinde
So that there is no fallas inne.
But what man that this werk beginne,

He mot awaite at every tide,
 So that nothing be left aside.
 First of the distillation
 Forth with the congelation
 Solucion, discention
 And kepe in his entention
 The point of sublimation,
 And forth with calcination
 Of verrey approbation
 Do that there be fixation
 With tempred hetes of the fire,
 Till he the parfit elixir
 Of thilke philosophres stone
 May gete, of which that many one
 Of philosophres whilom write.
 And if thou wolt the names wite
 Of thilke stone with other two,
 Whiche as the clerkes maden tho,
 So as the bokes it recorden,
 The kinde of hem I shall recorden.

Nota de tribus lapidibus, quos philosophi composuerunt, quorum primus dicitur lapis vegetabilis, qui sanitatem conservat, secundus dicitur lapis animalis, qui membra et virtutes sensibiles fortificat, tercius dicitur lapis mineralis, qui omnia metalla purificat et in suum perfectum naturali potencia deducit.

These olde philosophres wise
 By wey of kinde in sondry wise
 Thre stones made through clergy.
 The firste if I shall specify,
 Was cleped *vegetabilis*,
 Of which the propre vertue is
 To mannes hele for to serve
 As for to kepe and to preserve
 The body fro fikenesses alle,
 Till deth of kinde upon him falle.

The stone seconde I the behote
Is *lapis animalis* hote,
The whose vertue is propre and couth
For ere and eye and nase and mouth,
Wherof a man may here and se
And smelle and taste in his degre.
And for to fele and for to go
It helpeth a man, of bothe two
The wittes five he underfongeth
To kepe, as it to him belongeth.

The thridde stone in speciall
By name is cleped *minerall*,
Which the metalles of every mine
Attempreth, till that they ben fine,
And pureth hem by such a wey,
That all the vice goth away
Of rust, of stinke and of hardnesse.
And whan they ben of such clennessè,
This minerall, so as I finde,
Transformeth all the firste kinde
And maketh hem able to conceive
Through his vertue and receive
Both in substaunce and in figure
Of golde and silver the nature.
For they two ben thextremities,
To whiche after the propeties
Hath every metal his desire
With helpe and comfort of the fire
Forth with this stone, as it is said,
Which to the sonne and mone is laid,

For to the redde and to the white
This stone hath power to profite,
It maketh multiplication
Of golde and the fixation
It causeth, and of his habite
He doth the werke to be parfite
Of thilke elixir, which men calle
Alconomy, as is befall
To hem, that whilom were wise.
But nowe it stant all otherwise.
They speken fast of thilke stone,
But how to make it, now wot none
After the sothe experience.
And netheles great diligence
They setten up thilke dede
And spillen more than they spede.
For alle way they finde a lette,
Which bringeth in pouerte and dette
To hem, that riche were afore.
The los is had, the lucre is lore,
To get a pound they spenden five,
I not how such a craft shall thrive
In the maner as it is used.
It were better be refused
Than for to worchen upon wene
In thing, which stant nought as they wene.
But nought forthy, who that it knewe,
The science of him self is trewe
Upon the forme, as it was founded,
Wherof the names yet be grounded

Of hem, that first it founden out.
And thus the fame goth about
To such as soughten besinesse
Of vertue and of worthinesse,
Of whom if I the names calle,
Hermes was one the first of alle,
To whom this art is most applied.
Geber therof was magnified
And Ortolan and Morien,
Among the which is Avicen,
Which found and wrote a great partie
The practique of alconomie.
Whose bokes plainly, as they stonde
Upon this craft, few understonde.
But yet to put hem in assay,
There ben full many now a day,
That knowen litel what they mene.
It is nought one to wite and wene,
In forme of wordes they it trete,
But yet they failen of beyete,
For of to moche or of to lite
There is algate found a wite,
So that they folwe nought the line
Of the parfite medicine,
Which grounded is upon nature.
But they that writen the scripture
Of Greke, Arabe and of Caldee,
They were of suche auctorite,
That they first founden out the way
Of all that thou hast herd me say,

Wherof the cronique of her lore
Shall stonde in prise for evermore.
But toward oure marches here
Of the Latins, if thou wolt here
Of hem that whilom vertuous
Were and therto laborious,
Carment made of her engine
The firste letters of Latine,
Of which the tunge Romain cam,
Wherof that Aristarchus nam
Forth with Donat and Dindimns
The firste reule of scole, as thus
How that Latin shall be compouned
And in what wise it shall be founde,
That every word in his degre
Shall stond upon congruite.
And thilke time at Rome also
Was Tullius Cicero,
That writeth upon rethorique,
How that men shuld her wordes pike
After the forme of eloquence,
Which is, men fain, a great prudence.
And after that out of Hebrew
Jerome, which the langage knew,
The bible, in which the lawe is closed,
Into Latine he hath transposed.
And many an other writer eke
Out of Caldee, Arabe and Greke
With great labour the bokes wise
Translateden. And otherwise

The Latins of hem self also
Her study at thilke time so
With great travaile of scole toke
In sondry forme for to boke,
That we may take her evidences
Upon the lore of the sciences,
Of craftes bothe and of clergie,
Among the whiche in poesie
To the lovers Ovide wrote
And taught, if love be to hote,
In what maner it shulde akele.

Forthy my sone, if that thou fele,
That love wringe the to fore,
Behold Ovide and take his lore.

Confessor.

My fader, if they mighte spede
My love, I wolde his bokes rede.
And if they techen to restreigne
My love, it were an idel peine
To lerne a thing which may nought be.
For lich unto the grene tre,
If that men take his root away,
Right so min herte shulde deie,
If that my love be withdrawe.
Wherof touchend unto this sawe
There is but onely to pursue
My love and idelship escheue.

Amans.

My gode sone, soth to say,
If there be fiker any way
To love, thou hast said the best.
For who that woll have all his rest

Confessor.

And do no travaile at the nede,
 It is no reson that he spede
 In loves cause for to winne.
 For he, which dare nothing beginne,
 I not what thinge he shulde acheve.
 But over this thou shalt beleve,
 So as it fit the well to knowe,
 That there ben other vices flowe,
 Which unto love don great lette,
 If thou thin hert upon hem sette.

8. *Perdit homo causam linquens sua jura sopori,
 Et quasi dimidium pars sua mortis habet.
 Est in amore vigil Venus, et quod habet vigilantibus
 Obsequium thalamis fert vigilata suis.*

Hic loquitur de
 sompnolencia, que
 accidie cameraria
 dicta est, cuius na-
 tura semimortua
 alicuius negotii vi-
 giliis observari so-
 porifero torpore
 recusatur, unde qua-
 tenus amorem con-
 cernit confessor a-
 manti diligencius
 opponit.

Toward the slowe progeny
 There is yet one of compaigny,
 And he is cleped sompnolence,
 Which doth to slouth his reverence
 As he, which is his chamberlein,
 That many an hunderd time hath lein
 To slepe, whan he shulde wake.
 He hath with love trewes take,
 That wake who so wake will,
 If he may couche adown his bill,
 He hath all wowed what him list,
 That oft he goth to bed unkist
 And saith, that for no druery
 He woll nought leve his sluggardy.
 For though no man it wold allowe,
 To slepe lever than to wowe

Is his maner, and thus on nightes,
Whan he seeth the lusty knightes
Revelen, where these women are,
Awey he skulketh as an hare
And goth to bed and laith him softe
And of his slouth he dremeth ofte,
How that he sticketh in the mire
And how he fitteth by the fire
And claweth on his bare shankes
And how he climeth up the bankes
And falleth in the flades depe.
But thanne who so take kepe,
Whan he is fall in suche a dreame,
Right as a ship ayein the streame
He routeth with a slepy noise
And brustleth as a monkes froise,
Whan it is throwe into the panne.
And otherwhile felde whanne
That he may dreame a lusty sweven,
Him thenketh as though he were in heven
And as the world were holy his.
And than he speketh of that and this
And maketh his exposition
After his disposition
Of that he wold, and in such a wise
He doth to love all his servise,
I not what thank he shall deserve.
But sone, if thou wolt love serve,
I rede that thou do nought so.

Ha, gode fader, certes no.

Confessio amantis.

I had lever by my trouth,
 Er I were fet on such a slouth
 And bere such a slepy snout,
 Bothe eyen of my hede were out.
 For me were better fully deie
 Than I of suche fluggardie
 Had any name, god me shielde.
 For whan my moder was with childe
 And I lay in her wombe clos,
 I wolde rather Atropos,
 Which is goddesse of alle deth,
 Anone as I had any breth,
 Me hadde fro my moder cast.
 But now I am nothing agast,
 I thonke god, for Lachesis
 Ne Cloto, which her felaw is,
 Me shopen no such destine,
 Whan they at my nativite
 My wierdes setten as they wolde,
 But they me shopen, that I sholde
 Escheue of slepe the truandise,
 So that I hope in such a wise
 To love for to ben excused,
 That I no sompnolence have used.

For certes, fader Genius,
 Yet unto now it hath be thus
 At alle time if it befelle,
 So that I mighte come and dwelle
 In place there my lady were,
 I was nought slow ne slepy there.

For than I dare well undertake,
That whan her list on nightes wake
In chambre as to carole and daunce,
Me thenketh I may me more avaunce,
If I may gone upon her honde,
Than if I wonne a kinges londe.
For whan I may her hond beclippe,
With such gladnesse I daunce and skippe,
Me thenketh I touche nought the floor.
The roo, which renneth on the moor,
Is thanne nought so light as I.
So mow ye witen all forthy,
That for the time slepe I hate.
And whan it falleth other gate,
So that her like nought to daunce,
But on the dees to caste chaunce
Or axe of love some demaunde
Or elles that her list commaunde
To rede and here of Troilus,
Right as she wold or so or thus,
I am all redy to consent.
And if so is, that I may hent
Somtime amonge a good leifer,
So as I dare of my desir
I telle a part, but whan I prey,
Anone she biddeth me go my wey
And faith : It is fer in the night.
And I swere, it is even light.
But as it falleth ate laste,
There may no worldes joie laste,

So mote I nedes fro her wende
 And of my wacche make an ende.
 And if she thanne hede toke,
 How pitouſlich on her I loke,
 Whan that I ſhall my leue take,
 Her ought of mercy for to ſlake
 Her daunger, which faith ever nay.
 But he faith often : Have good day,
 That loth is for to take his leue.
 Therefore while I may beleve,
 I tarie forth the night alonge.
 For it is nought on me alonge
 To ſlepe, that I ſo ſoone go,
 Till that I mote algate ſo
 And thanne I bidde : God her ſe,
 And ſo down knelende on my kne
 I take leue, and if I ſhall
 I kiſſe her and go forth withall.
 And other while, if that I dore,
 Er I come fully ate dore,
 I torne ayein and feigne a thing,
 As though I hadde loſt a ring
 Or ſomwhat elles, for I wolde
 Kiſſe her eftſone, if I ſholde.
 But ſelden is, that I ſo ſpede.
 And whan I ſe, that I mot nede
 Departe, I departe and thanne
 With all my herte I curſe and banne,
 That ever ſlepe was made for eye.
 For as me thenketh I might drie

Withoute slepe to waken ever,
So that I shulde nought dissever
Fro her, in whom is all my light.
And than I curse also the night
With all the will of my corage
And say : Away thou black ymage,
Which of thy derke cloudy face
Makest all the worldes light deface
And caufest unto slepe a way,
By which I mot now gone away
Out of my ladies compaignie.
O slepy night, I the desie
And wolde that thou lay in presse
With Proserpine the goddesse
And with Pluto the helle king.
For till I se the daies spring,
I sette slepe nought at a rishe.
And with that worde I sigh and wishe
And say : Ha, why ne were it day,
For yet my lady than I may
Beholde, though I do no more.
And este I thenke furthermore,
To some man how the night doth ese,
Whan he hath thing, that may him plese
The longe nightes by his side,
Where as I faile and go beside.
But slepe I not wherof it serveth,
Of which no man his thank deserveth
To get him love in any place,
But is an hindrer of his grace

And maketh hem dede as for a throwe,
Right as a stoke were overthrowe.
And so, my fader, in this wise
The slepy nightes I despise
And ever amiddes of my tale
I thenke upon the nightingale,
Which slepeth nought by wey of kinde
For love, in bokes as I finde.
Thus ate last I go to bedde
And yet min herte lith to wedde
With her, where as I came fro,
Though I departe, he woll nought so.
There is no lock may shet him out,
Him nedeth nought to gon about,
That perce may the harde wal,
Thus is he with her overall,
That be her lefe, or be her loth,
Into her bed min herte goth
And softly taketh her in his arme
And feleth how that she is warme
And wissheth, that his body were
To fele, that he feleth there.
And thus my selven I torment,
Til that the dede slepe me hent.
But thanne by a thousand score
Wel more than I was to-fore
I am tormented in my slepe,
But that I dreame is nought on shepe,
For I ne thenke nought on wulle,
But I am drecched to the fulle

Of love, that I have to kepe,
That now I laugh and now I wepe
And now I lese and now I winne
And now I ende and now beginne.
And other while I dreame and mete,
That I alone with her mete
And that daunger is left behinde.
And than in slepe such joy I finde,
That I ne bede never awake.
But after, whan I hede take,
And shall arise upon the morwe,
Than is all turned into sorwe,
Nought for the cause I shall arise,
But for I mette in such a wife,
And ate last I am bethought,
That all is vein and helpeth nought,
But yet me thinketh by my wille
I wold have lay and slepe stille
To meten ever of such a sweven,
For than I had a slepy heven.

My sone, and for thou tellest so,
A man may finde of time ago,
That many a sweven hath be certain,
All be it so, that som men fain,
That swevens ben of no credence.
But for to shewe in evidence,
That they full ofte sothe thinges
Betoken, I thenke in my writings
To telle a tale therupon,
Which fell by olde daies gone.

Confessor.

Hic ponit exemplum, qualiter sompnia prenoſtice veritatis quandoque certitudinem figurant. Et narrat, quod cum Ceix rex Trocinie pro reformatione fratris ſui Dedalionis in ancipitem tranſmutati peregre proficiſcens in mari longius a patria dimerſus fuerat, Juno mittens Yridem nunciam ſuam in partes Chimerie ad domum Sompni juſſit, quod ipſe Alceone dicti regis uxori huius rei eventum per ſompnia certificaret. Quo facto Alceona rem perſcrutans corpus mariti ſui, ubi ſuper fluctus mortuus jaſtabatur, invenit, que pre dolore anguſtiata cupiens corpus amplectere, in altum mare ſuper ipſum proſiliit, unde dii miſerti amborum corpora in aves, que adhuc Alceones dicte ſunt, ſubito converterunt.

This ſinde I writen in poeſy
 Ceix the king of Troceny
 Hadde Alceon to his wife,
 Which as her owne hertes life
 Him loveth. And he had alſo
 A brother, which was cleped tho
 Dedalion, and he par cas
 Fro kinde of man forſhape was
 Into a goſhauke for likenefſe,
 Wherof this king great hevineſſe
 Hath take and thought in his corage
 To gone upon a pelrinage
 Into a ſtraunge region,
 Where he hath his devocion
 To done his ſacrifice and prey,
 If that he might in any wey
 Toward the goddes ſinde grace
 His brothers hele to purchace,
 So that he mighte be reformed
 Of that he hadde be transformed.
 To this purpoſe and to this ende
 This king is redy for to wende
 As he, which wolde go by ſhip.
 And for to done him felaſhip
 His wife unto the ſee him brought
 With all her herte and him beſought,
 That he the time her wolde ſain,
 Whan that he thoughte come ayein.
 Within, he ſaith, two monthes day.
 And thus in alle haſte he may

He toke his leve and forth he faileth
Wepend, and she her self bewaileth
And torneth home there she cam fro.
But whan the monthes were ago,
The which he fet of his coming,
And that she herde no tiding,
There was no care for to seche,
Wherof the goddes to beseche.
Tho she began in many a wise
And to Juno her sacrifice
Above all other most she dede
And for her lord she hath so hede
To wite and knowe how that he ferd,
That Juno the goddesse her herde
Anone, and upon this matere
She badde Yris her messagere
To Slepes hous that she shal wende
And bid him, that he make an ende
By sweven and shewen all the cas
Unto this lady, how it was.

This Yris fro the highe stage,
Whiche undertake hath the message,
Her reiny cope did upon,
The which was wonderly begone
With colours of diverse hewe
An hunderd mo than men it knewe,
The heven liche unto a bowe
She bende and she cam downe lowe,
The god of slepe where that she fond
And that was in a straunge lond,

Which marcheth upon Chimery.
For there, as faith the poesy,
The god of slepe hath made his hous,
Whiche of entaile is merveilous.

Under an hill there is a cave,
Which of the sonne may nought have,
So that no man may knowe aright
The point betwene the day and night.
There is no fire, there is no sparke,
There is no dore, which may charke,
Wherof an eye shulde unshet,
So that inward there is no let.
And for to speke of that withoute,
There stant no great tre nigh aboute,
Wheron there mighte crowe or pie
Alighte for to clepe or crie.
There is no cock to crowe day
Ne beste none, which noife may
The hille, but all aboute round
There is growend upon the ground
Popy, which bereth the fede of slepe,
With other herbes suche an hepe.
A stille water for the nones
Rennend upon the smalle stones,
Which hight of Lethes the river,
Under that hille in such maner
There is, which yiveth great appetite
To slepe. And thus ful of delite
Slepe hath his hous, and of his couche
Within his chambre if I shall touche

Of hebenus that slepy tre
The bordes all aboute be,
And for he shulde slepe softe
Upon a fether bed alofte
He lith with many a pilwe of doun,
The chambre is strowed up and doun
With swevenes many a thousand fold.
Thus came Yris into this holde
And to the bed, whiche is all black,
She goth, and ther with Slepe she spake,
And in this wise as she was bede
The message of Juno she dede,
Full ofte her wordes she reherceth,
Er she his slepy eres perceth
With mochel wo. But ate laste
His slombrend eyen he upcaste
And said her, that it shal be do,
Wherof amonge a thousand tho
Within his hous, that slepy were,
In speciall he chese out there
Thre, whiche shulden do this dede.
The first of hem, so as I rede,
Was Morpheus, the whose nature
Is for to take the figure
Of that persone that him liketh,
Wherof that he ful ofte entriketh
The life, which slepe shal by night.
And Ithecus that other hight,
Which hath the vois of every soun,
The chese and the condicioun

Of every life what so it is.
 The thridde suend after this
 Is Panthafas, which may transforme
 Of every thing the righte forme
 And chaunge it in another kinde.
 Upon hem thre, so as I finde,
 Of swevens stant all thapparence,
 Which other while is evidence
 And other while but a jape.
 But netheles it is so shape,
 That Morpheus by night alone
 Appereth unto Alceone
 In likenesse of her husbonde
 Al naked dede upon the stronde,
 And how he dreint in speciall
 These other two it shewen all.
 The tempest of the blacke cloude
 The wode see, the windes loude
 All this she met, and sigh him deien,
 Wherof that she began to crien
 Slepnd a bedde there she lay.
 And with that noise of her affray
 Her women sterten up aboute,
 Whiche of her lady were in doubte
 And axen her, how that she ferde.
 And she right as she sigh and herde
 Her sweven hath tolde hem every dele.
 And they it halfen alle wele
 And fain, it is a token of good.
 But til she wist how that it stood,

She hath no comfort in her herte.
Upon the morwe and up she sterte
And to the see, where as she met
The body lay, withoute lete
She drough, and whanne she cam nigh
Starke dede, his armes sprad, she sigh
Her lord, fletend upon the wawe,
Wherof her wittes be withdrawe.
And she, which toke of deth no kepe,
Anone forth lepte into the depe
And wold have caught him in her arme.
This infortune of double harme
The goddes from the heven above
Beheld and for the trouthe of love,
Whiche in this worthy lady stood,
They have upon the salte flood
Her dreinte lorde and her also
Fro deth to life torned so,
That they ben shapen into briddes
Swimmend upon the wawe amiddes.
And whan she sigh her lord livend
In likeneffe of a bird swimmend
And she was of the same fort,
So as she mighte do disport
Upon the joie, which she hadde,
Her winges both abroad she spradde
And him so as she may suffise
Beclipt and kist in suche a wise,
As she was whilome wont to do.
Her winges for her armes two

She toke and for her lippes softe
 Her harde bille, and so ful ofte
 She fondeth in her briddes forme,
 If that she might her self conforme
 To do the plesaunce of a wife,
 As she did in that other life.
 For though she hadde her power lore
 Her will stood, as it was to-fore,
 And serveth him so as she may.
 Wherof into this ilke day
 To-gider upon the see they wone,
 Where many a doughter and a sone
 They bringen forth of briddes kinde.
 And for men shulden take in minde
 This Alceon the trewe quene,
 Her briddes yet as it is sene
 Of Alceon the name bere.

Confessor. Lo thus, my sone, it may the stere
 Of swevens for to take kepe,
 For ofte time a man a slepe
 May se what after shall betide.
 Forthy it helpeth at some tide
 A man to slepe as it belongeth,
 But slouthe no life underfongeth,
 Whiche is to love appertenaunt.

Amans. My fader, upon the covenant
 I dare wel make this avowe,
 Of all my life into nowe
 Als fer as I can understonde
 Yet took I never slepe on honde,

Whan it was time for to wake,
For though min eye it wolde take,
Min herte is ever there ayein.
But netheles to speke it plein
All this that I have said you here
Of my wakinge, as ye may here,
It toucheth to my lady swete,
For other wise I you behete,
In straunge place whan I go
Me list no thing to wake so.
For whan the women listen play
And I her se nought in the way,
Of whome I shulde merthe take,
Me list nought longe for to wake.
But if it be for pure shame
Of that I wolde escheue a name,
That they ne shuld have cause none
To say: Ha, where goth such one,
That hath forlore his contenance,
And thus among I finge and daunce
And feigne lust, thereas none is.
For ofte fith I fele this,
Of thought, which in min herte falleth,
Whan it is night min hede appalleth,
And that is for I se her nought,
Whiche is the waker of my thought.
And thus as timelich as I may
Ful oft, whan it is brode day,
I take of all these other leve
And go my wey, and they beleve,

That seen par cas her loves there,
 And I go forth as nought ne were
 Unto my bed, so that alone
 I may there ligge, figh and grone
 And wisshen all the longe night,
 Til that I see the daies light.
 I not if that be sompnolence,
 But upon youre conscience,
 Min holy fader, demeth ye.

Confessor. My sone, I am well paid with the
 Of slepe, that thou the sluggardy
 By night in loves compaignie
 Escheued hast, and do thy pain
 So, that thy love dare nought pleine.
 For love upon his lust wakende
 Is ever and wolde that none ende
 Were of the longe nightes set,
 Wherof that thou beware the bet
 To telle a tale I am bethought,
 How love and slepe accorden nought.

Hic dicit, quod vigilia in amantibus, et non sompnolencia laudanda est. Et ponit exemplum de Cephalo filio Phebi, qui nocturno silencio auroram amicam suam diligencius amplectens solem et lunam interpellabat, videlicet quod sol in circulo ab oriente distanciori currum cum luce sua retardaret, et quod luna spera sua longissima orbem circumiens noctem continu-

For love who that list to wake
 By night, he may ensample take
 Of Cephalus, whan that he lay
 With Aurora the swete may
 In armes all the longe night.
 But whan it drough toward the light,
 That he within his herte figh
 The day, which was the morwe nigh,
 Anone unto the sonne he preyde
 For lust of love and thus he saide :

O Phebus, which the daies light
 Gouvernest til that it be night
 And gladdest every creature
 After the lawe of thy nature,
 But netheles there is a thing,
 Whiche only to thy knouleching
 Belongeth, as in privete
 To love and to his duete,
 Whiche axeth nought to ben apert,
 But in silence and in covert
 Defireth for to be beshaded.
 And thus whan that the light is faded
 And vesper sheweth him alofte
 And that the night is longe and softe
 Under the cloudes derke and stille,
 Than hath this thing most of his wille.
 Forthy unto thy mightes high,
 As thou, whiche art the daies eye
 Of love and might no counseil hide,
 Upon this derke nightes tide
 With all min herte I the besече,
 That I plesaunce mighte seche
 With her, which lieth in min armes.
 Withdrawe the banner of thin armes
 And let thy lightes ben unborne
 And in the signe of Capricorne
 The hous approped to Satorne,
 I prey the, that thou wolt sojorne,
 Where ben the nightes derke and longe.
 For I my love have underfonge,

aret, ita ut ipsum Ce-
 phalum amplexibus
 Aure vultum pri-
 usquam dies illuces-
 ceret suis deliciis ad-
 quiescere diucius per-
 mittere dignarentur.

Which lith here by my side naked
 As she, which wolde ben awaked,
 And me list no thing for to slepe,
 So were it good to take kepe
 Now at this nede of my praier,
 And that the like for to stere
 Thy firy cart and so ordeigne,
 That thou thy swifte hors restreigne
 Lowe under erthe in occident,
 That they towards orient
 By cercle go the longe wey.
 And eke to the, Diane, I prey,
 Which cleped art of thy noblesse
 The nightes mone and the goddesse,
 That thou to me be gracious
 And in Cancro thin owne hous
 Ayein Phebus in opposite
 Stond al this time, and of delite
 Behold Venus with a glad eye,
 For than upon astronomy
 Of due constellacion
 Thou makest prolificacion
 And dost that children ben begete,
 Which grace if that I might gete
 With all min herte I woll serve
 By night and thy vigile observe.

Confessor. Lo, thus this lusty Cephalus,
 Praid unto Phebe and to Phebus
 The night in lengthe for to drawe,
 So that he mighte do the lawe

In thilke point of loves heste,
Which cleped is the nightes feste
Withoute slepe of sluggardy,
Which Venus oute of compaigny
Hath put away, as thilke fame,
Which lustles fer from alle game
In chambre doth full ofte wo
A bedde, whan it falleth so,
That love shulde ben awaited.
But slouthe, which is evil affaited,
With slepe hath made his retenue,
That what thinge is to love due
Of all his dette he paieth none.
He wot nought, how the night is gone
Ne how the day is come aboute,
But only for to slepe and route,
Til high midday, that he arise.
But Cephalus did otherwise,
As thou, my sone, hast herd above.

My fader, who that hath his love
A bedde naked by his fide
And wolde than his eyen hide
With slepe, I not what man is he.
But certes as touchend of me,
That fell me never yet er this.
But other while whan so is,
That I may cacche slepe on honde
Liggend alone, than I fonde
To dreame a mery sweven er day.
And if so falle, that I may

Amans.

My thought with such a sweven plese,
 Me thenketh I am somdele in ese,
 For I none other comfort have.
 So nedeth nought, that I shall crave
 The sonnes carte for to tarie
 Ne yet the mone, that she carie
 Her cours alonge upon the heven,
 For I am nought the more in even
 Towardes love in no degre,
 But in my slepe yet than I se
 Somwhat in sweven of that me liketh,
 Whiche afterward min hert entriketh,
 Whan that I finde it other wise.
 So wote I nought of what service
 That slepe to mannes ese doth.

Confessor. My sone, certes thou saist soth.
 But only that it helpeth kind
 Somtime in phisique as I finde,
 Whan it is take by mesure,
 But he which can no slepe mesure
 Upon the reule as it belongeth
 Ful ofte of sodein chaunce he fongeth
 Suche infortune, that him greveth.
 But who these olde bokes leveth
 Of sompnolence howe it is write,
 There may a man the sothe wite,
 If that he wolde ensample take,
 That other while is good to wake,
 Wherof a tale in poesy
 I thenke for to specify.

Ovide telleth in his sawes,
 How Jupiter by olde dawes
 Lay by a maide, whiche Yo
 Was cleped, wherof that Juno
 His wife was wrothe and the goddesse
 Of Yo torneth the likenesse
 Into a cow to gon there oute
 The large felde all aboute
 And gette her mete upon the grene.
 And therupon this highe quene
 Betoke her Argus for to kepe,
 For he was selden wont to slepe
 And yet he had an hunderd eyen,
 And all aliche wel they fighen.
 Now herken how that he was beguiled.
 Mercury, which was all affiled,
 This cow to stele he came desguised
 And had a pipe wel devised
 Upon the notes of musique,
 Wherof he might his eres like.
 And over that he had affaited
 His lusty tales and awaited
 His time. And thus into the felde
 He came, where Argus he behelde
 With Yo, which beside him went,
 With that his pipe anon he hent
 And gan to pipe in his manere
 Thing, which was slepy for to here.
 And in his piping ever amonge
 He tolde him such a lusty songe,

Hic loquitur in amoris causa contra istos, qui sompnolencie dediti ea, que servare tenentur, amittunt, et narrat, quod cum Yo puella pulcherrima a Junone in vaccam transformata et in Argi custodiam sic deposita fuisset, superveniens Mercurius Argum dormientem occidit et ipsam vaccam a pascua rapiens, quo voluit, secum perduxit.

That he the fool hath brought a flepe,
 There was none eye that mighte kepe
 His hede, which Mercury of-smote
 And forth with all anone foot hote
 He stale the cow, whiche Argus kepte,
 And all this fel for that he slepte.
 Ensample it was to many mo,
 That mochel slepe doth ofte wo,
 Whan it is time for to wake.
 For if a man this vice take
 In sompnolence and him delite,
 Men shuld upon his dore write
 His epitaphe and on his grave,
 For he to spille and nought to save
 Is shape, as though he were dede.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, hold up thin hede
 And let no slepe thin eye englue,
 But whan it is to reson due.

Amans. My fader, as touchend of this
 Right so as I you tolde it is,
 That ofte a bedde, whan I sholde,
 I may nought slepe, though I wolde.
 For love is ever faste byme,
 Which taketh none hede of due time,
 For whan I shall min eyen close,
 Anone min hert he woll oppose
 And hold his scole in such a wise,
 Till it be day that I arise,
 That selde it is whan that I slepe.
 And thus fro sompnolence I kepe

Min eye. And forthy if there be
 Ought elles more in this degre
 Now axeth forth. My sone, yis.
 For slouth, whiche as moder is,
 The forth drawer and the norice
 To man of many a dredful vice,
 Hath yet another last of alle,
 Which many a man hath made to falle,
 Where that he might never arise,
 Wherof for thou the shalt avise,
 Er thou so with thy self misfare,
 What vice it is, I woll declare.

Confessor.

*Nil fortuna juvat, ubi desperacio ledit.
 Quo deficcet humor, non viridescit humus.
 Magnanimus sed amor spem ponit et inde salutem
 Consequitur, quod ei prospera fata favent.*

9.

Whan slouth hath don all that he may
 To drive forth the longe day,
 Till it become to the nede,
 Than ate last upon the dede
 He loketh how his time is lore,
 And is so wo begone therfore,
 That he within his thought conceiveth
 Tristesse and so him self deceiveth,
 That he wanhope bringeth inne,
 Where is no comfort to beginne.
 But every joy him is deslaied,
 So that within his herte affraied
 A thousand time with one breth
 Wepend he wissheth after deth,

Hic loquitur super
 ultima specie acci-
 die, que tristitia
 sive desperacio di-
 citur, cuius obsti-
 nata condicio toti-
 us consolacionis
 spem deponens ali-
 cuius remedii, quo
 liberari poterit, for-
 tunam sibi evenire
 impossibile credit.

Whan he fortune fint aduerse.
 For than he woll his hope reherse,
 As though his world were all forlore,
 And faith: Alas, that I was bore,
 How shall I live? how shall I do?
 For now fortune is thus my fo,
 I wot well god me woll nought helpe,
 What shulde I than of joies yelpe,
 Whan there no bote is of my care.
 So overcast is my welfare,
 That I am shapen all to strife.
 Helas, that I nere of this life,
 Er I be fullich overtake.
 And thus he woll his sorwe make,
 As god him mighte nought availe.
 But yet ne woll he nought travaile
 To helpe him self at suche a nede,
 But sloutheth under suche a drede,
 Whiche is affermed in his herte
 Right as he mighte nought asterte
 The worldes wo, which he is inne.
 Also whan he is falle in sinne,
 Him thenketh he is so fer culpable,
 That god woll nought be merciable
 So great a sinne to foryive.
 And thus he leveth to be thrive.
 And if a man in thilke throwe
 Wold him counseile, he wol nought knowe
 The sothe, though a man it finde.
 For tristesse is of suche a kinde,

That for to mainten his foly,
 He hath with him obstinacy,
 Which is within of fuche a slouth,
 That he forsaketh alle trouth
 And woll unto no reson bowe.
 And yet ne can he nought abowe
 His owne skille, but of hede
 Thus dwyneth he, till he be dede
 In hindring of his owne estate.
 For where a man is obstinate,
 Wanhope folweth ate laste,
 Which may nought longe after laste,
 Till slouth make of him an ende.
 But god wot whider he shall wende.

Obstinacio est con-
 tradictio veritatis
 agnita.

My sone, and right in such manere,
 There be lovers of hevy chere,
 That forwen more than is nede,
 Whan they be taried of her spede
 And conne nought hem selven rede,
 But lesen hope for to spede
 And stinten love to pursue.
 And thus they faden hide and hewe
 And lustles in her hertes waxe.
 Herof it is that I wolde axe,
 If thou, my sone, arte one of tho?

Confessor.

Ha, gode fader, it is so,
 Outtake o point, I am beknowe.
 For elles I am overthrowe
 In all that ever ye have saide,
 My forwe is evermore unteide

Confessio amantis.

And fecheth over all my veines.
 But for to counseile of my peines,
 I can no bote do therto.
 And thus withouten hope I go,
 So that my wittes ben empeired
 And I as who faith am dispeired
 To winne love of thilke fwete,
 Withoute whom, I you behete,
 Min herte, that is so bestadde,
 Right inly never may be gladde.
 For by my trouth I shall nought lie
 Of pure forwe, whiche I drie,
 For that she faith she will me nought,
 With drecching of min owne thought
 In suche a wanhope I am falle,
 That I ne can unnethes calle
 As for to speke of any grace
 My ladies mercy to purchase.
 But yet I faie nought for this,
 That all in my default it is,
 That I cam never yet in stede,
 Whan time was, that I my bede
 Ne saide, and as I dorste tolde.
 But never found I, that she wolde
 For ought she knewe of min entent
 To speke a goodly worde assent.
 And netheles this dare I say,
 That if a finfull wolde prey
 To god of his foryivenesse
 With half so great a besinesse,

As I have do to my lady
 In lack of axing of mercy,
 He shulde never come in helle.
 And thus I may you sothly telle
 Sauf only that I crie and bidde,
 I am in tristesse all amidde
 And fulfilled of desperaunce.
 And therof yef me my penaunce,
 Min holy fader, as you liketh.

My sone, of that thin herte siketh
 With forwe might thou nought amende,
 Till love his grace woll the sende,
 For thou thin owne cause empeirest,
 What time as thou thy self despeirest.
 I not what other thinge availeth
 Of hope, whan the herte faileth,
 For suche a fore is incurable,
 And eke the goddes ben vengeable,
 And that a man may right well frede
 These olde bokes who so rede
 Of thing, which hath befalle er this,
 Now here, of what ensample it is.

Whilom by olde daies fer
 Of Mese was the king Theucer,
 Whiche had a knight to sone Iphis.
 Of love and he so mastred is,
 That he hath set all his corage
 As to reward of his lignage
 Upon a maide of lowe estate.
 But though he were a potestate

Confessor.

*Hic narrat, qualiter
 Iphis, regis Theucris
 filius, ob amorem cui-
 usdam puelle nomine
 Araxarathen, quam
 neque donis aut pre-
 cibus vincere potuit,
 desperans ante patris
 ipsius puelle januas
 noctanter se suspendit,
 unde dii commoti,
 dictam puellam in la-
 pidem durissimam
 transmutarunt, quam*

rex Theucer una cum
filio suo apud civita-
tem Salaminam in
templo Veneris pro
perpetua memoria se-
peliri et locari fecit.

Of worldes good, he was subgit
To love and put in suche a plite,
That he exceedeth the mesure
Of reson, that him self assure
He can nought. For the more he praid,
The lasse love on him she laid.
He was with love unwise constreigned,
And she with reson was restrained.
The lustes of his herte he sueth,
And she for drede shame eschueeth,
And as she shulde, toke good hede
To save and kepe her womanhede.
And thus the thing stood in debate
Betwene his lust and her estate,
He yaf, he send, he spake by mouth,
But yet for ought that ever he couth
Unto his spede he found no wey,
So that he cast his hope away.
Within his hert he gan despeire
Fro day to day and so empeire,
That he hath lost all his delite
Of lust, of slepe, of appetite,
That he through strength of love lasseth
His wit and reson overpasseth
As he, whiche of his life ne rought.
His deth upon him self he sought,
So that by night his wey he nam,
There wiste none, where he becam.
The night was derk, there shone no mone,
To-fore the gates he cam sone,

Where that this yonge maiden was,
And with this wofull worde, *helas*,
His dedly pleintes he began
So stille, that there was no man
It herde, and than he saide thus :
O thou Cupide, O thou Venus,
Fortuned by whose ordenaunce
Of love is every mannes chaunce.
Ye knowen all min hole hert,
That I ne may your hond astert,
On you is ever that I crie,
And you deigneth nought to plie
Ne toward me your ere encline.
Thus for I se no medicine
To make an ende of my quarele,
My deth shall be in stede of hele.
Ha, thou my wofull lady dere,
Which dwellest with thy fader here
And slepest in thy bedde at ese,
Thou wost nothing of my disese,
How thou and I be now unmete.
Ha lord, what sweven shalt thou mete ?
What dremes hast thou now on honde ?
Thou slepest there, and I here stonde,
Though I no deth to the deserve.
Here shall I for thy love sterue,
Here shall I a kings sone deie
For love and for no felony,
Wheder thou therof have joy or forwe,
Here shalt thou se me dede to morwe.

O herte hard aboven alle,
 This deth, which shall to me befalle,
 For that thou wol nought do my grace,
 Yet shall be tolde in many a place,
 That I am dede for love and trouth
 In thy defaulte and in thy slouth,
 Thy daunger shall to many mo
 Ensamble be for evermo,
 Whan they my wofull deth recorde.
 And with that worde he toke a corde,
 With which upon the gate tre
 He henge him self, that was pite.
 The morwe cam, the night is gone,
 Men comen out and figh anone,
 Where that this yonge lord was dede.
 There was an hous withoute rede,
 For no man knewe the cause why,
 There was wepinge, there was cry.
 This maiden, whan that she it herde
 And figh this thing howe it misferde,
 Anone she wiste what it ment
 And all the cause how it went,
 To all the world she tolde it out
 And preith to hem, that were about,
 To take of her the vengeaunce,
 For she was cause of thilke chaunce,
 Why that this kinges sone is spilt.
 She taketh upon her self the gilt
 And is all redy to the peine,
 Whiche any man her wold ordeigne.

And but if any other wolde,
She faith, that she her selve sholde
Do wreche with her owne honde,
Through out the worlde in every londe
That every life therof shall speke,
How she her self it shulde wreke.
She wepeth, she crieth, she swouneth ofte,
She cast her eyen up alofte
And said among full pitously :
O god, thou wost wel it am I,
For whom Iphis is thus beseine,
Ordeigne so, that men may saine
A thousand winter after this,
How suche a maiden did amis,
And as I didde do to me,
For I ne didde no pite
To him, which for my love is lore,
Do no pite to me therfore.
And with this word she fell to grounde
A swoune, and there she lay astounde.

The goddes, which her pleintes herd
And sigh how woefully she ferd,
Her life they toke away anone
And shopen her into a stone
After the forme of her ymage
Of body both and of visage.
And for the merveile of this thing
Unto this place came the king
And eke the quene and many mo,
And whan they wisten it was so,

As I have tolde it here above,
How that Iphis was dede for love,
Of that he hadde be refused,
They helden alle men excused
And wondren upon the vengeaunce.
And for to kepe remembraunce
This faire ymage maiden liche
With compaignie noble and riche
With torche and great solempnite
To Salamine the cite
They lede and carie forth withall
This dede corps, and faine it shall
Beside thilke ymage have
His sepulture and be begrave.
This corps and this ymage thus
Into the cite to Venus,
Where that goddesse her temple had,
To-gider bothe two they lad.
This ilke ymage as for miracle
Was fet upon an high pinnacle
That alle men it mighte knowe,
And under that they maden lowe
A tombe riche for the nones
Of marbre and eke of jaspre stones,
Wherin that Iphis was beloken
That evermore it shall be spoken.
And for men shall the sothe wite
They have her epitaphe write
As thing, which shulde abide stable,
The letters graven in a table

Of marbre were and saiden this :
Here lith, which sloughe him self, Iphis
For love of Araxarathen,
And in ensample of tho women,
That suffren men to deie so,
Her forme a man may se also,
How it is torned fleshe and bone
Into the figure of a stone.
He was to neissh and she to harde,
Beware forthy here afterwarde,
Ye men and women bothe two,
Ensamplenth you of that was tho.

Lo thus, my sone, as I the say
It greveth by diverse way
In desespere a man to falle,
Which is the laste braunch of alle
Of slouthes, as thou hast herd devise,
Wherof that thou thy self avise.
Good is er that thou be deceived,
Wher that the grace of hope is weived.

Confessor.

My fader, how so that it stonde,
Now have I plainly understonde
Of slouthes court the properte,
Wherof touchend in my degre
For ever I thenke to beware.
But over this so as I dare
With all min hert I you beseeche,
That ye me wolde enforme and teche,
What there is more of your apprise
In love als well as otherwise,

Amans.

So that I may me clene shrive.

Confessor. My sone, while thou art alive
And haft also thy fulle minde,
Among the vices, which I finde,
There is yet one such of the seven,
Which all this world hath set uneven
And causeth many thinges wronge,
Where he the cause hath underfonge,
Wherof hereafter thou shalt here
The forme bothe and the matere.

Explicit liber quartus.



Incipit Liber Quintus.

*Obstat avaricia nature legibus, et que
Largus amor poscit, striētius illa vetat.
Omne, quod est nimium, viciosum dicitur aurum,
Vellera sicut oves servat avarus opes.
Non decet, ut soli servabitur es, sed amor
Debet homo solam solus habere suam.*

1.



IRST whan the highe god
began
This worlde and that the kind
of man

Was fall into no gret encrefs,
For worldes good was tho no pres,
But all was fet to the comune,
They speken than of no fortune
Or for to lese or for to winne,
Till avarice brought it inne.
And that was whan the world was woxe
Of man, of hors, of shepe, of oxe,
And that men knewen the money,
Tho wente pees out of the wey
And werre came on every fide,
Whiche alle love laid aside

Hic in quinto libro
intendit confessor
tractare de avari-
cia, que omnium
malorum radix esse
dicitur, necnon de
eiusdem vicii spe-
ciebus, et primum
ipsum avaricie na-
turam describens
amanti quatenus
amorem concernit
super hoc specia-
lius opponit.

And of comun his propre made,
So that in stede of shovel and spade
The sharpe swerd was take on honde.
And in this wise it cam to londe,
Wherof men maden diches depe
And highe walles for to kepe
The gold, which avarice encloseth.
But all to litel him supposeth,
Though he might all the world purchase.
For what thing, that he may embrace
Of golde, of catel or of londe,
He let it never out of his honde,
But get him more and halt it fast,
As though the world shuld ever last.
So is he lich unto the helle,
For as these olde bokes telle,
What cometh ther in las or more
It shall departe nevermore.
Thus whan he hath his cofre loken,
It shall nought after ben unstoken,
But whan him list to have a sight
Of gold, how that it shineth bright,
That he theron may loke and muse,
For otherwise he dare nought use
To take his part or lasse or more.
So is he pouer, and evermore
Him lacketh, that he hath inough.
An oxe draweth in the plough
Of that him self hath no profite,
A shep right in the same plite

His wolle bereth, but on a day
An other taketh the flees away.
Thus hath he, that he nought ne hath,
For he therof his part ne tath,
To say how suche a man hath good
Who so that reson understood
It is unproperliche said,
That good hath him and halt him taid,
That he ne gladdeth nought withall,
But is unto his good a thrall
And a subgit thus serveth he,
Where that he shulde maister be,
Suche is the kinde of thavarous.

My sone, as thou art amorous,
Tell if thou fare of love so.

Confessor.

My fader, as it semeth no,
That avarous yet never I was,
So as ye setten me the cas.
For as ye tolden here above
In full possession of love
Yet was I never here to-fore,
So that me thenketh well therfore,
I may excuse well my dede.
But of my will withoute drede
If I that trefor mighte gete,
It shulde never be foryete,
That I ne wolde it faste holde,
Till god of love him selve wolde,
That deth us shuld departe atwo.
For leveth well, I love her so,

Confessio amantis.

That even with min owne life,
 If I that swete lusty wife
 Might ones welden at my wille,
 For ever I wold her holde stille.
 And in this wise taketh kepe,
 If I her had, I wolde her kepe
 And yet no friday wolde I fast,
 Though I her kepte and helde fast.
 Fy on the bagges in the kist,
 I had inough, if I her kist.
 For certes if she were min,
 I had her lever than a mine
 Of gold, for all this worldes riche
 Ne mighte make me so riche
 As she, that is so inly good.
 I sette nought of other good,
 For might I gette such a thing,
 I had a tresor for a king.
 And though I wolde it faste holde,
 I were thanne wel beholde.
 But I might pipe now with lasse
 And suffre that it overpasse,
 Nought with my will, for thus I wolde
 Ben avarous if that I sholde.
 But fader, I you herde say,
 How thavarous hath yet some way,
 Wherof he may be glad. For he
 May, whan him list, his tresor se
 And grope and fele it all aboute.
 But I full ofte am shet theroute,

There as my worthy tresor is,
So is my life lich unto this,
That ye me tolden here to-fore,
How that an oxe his yoke hath bore
For thing that shulde him nought availe.
And in this wise I me travaile.
For who that ever hath the welfare
I wot wel that I have the care,
For I am had and nought ne have
And am as who faith loves knave.
Now demeth in your owne thought,
If this be avarice or nought.

My sone, I have of the no wonder,
Though thou to serve be put under
With love, which to kinde accordeth.
But so as every boke recordeth,
It is to finde no plesauce,
That men above his sustenaunce
Unto the gold shall serve and bowe,
For that may no reson avowe.
But avarice netheles,
If he may geten his encres
Of gold, that wold he serve and kepe,
For he taketh of nought elles kepe,
But for to fille his bagges large,
And all is to him but a charge,
For he ne parteth nought withall,
But kepeth it, as a servaunt shall,
And thus though that he multiply
His golde, without tresory

Confessor.

He is, for man is nought amended
 With gold, but if it be despended
 To mannes use, wherof I rede
 A tale and take therof good hede
 Of that befell by olde tide,
 As telleth us the clerke Ovide.

Hic loquitur contra
 istos avaros et narrat,
 qualiter Mida rex
 Frigie Cillenum Ba-
 chi sacerdotem, quem
 rustici vinculis ferreis
 alligarunt, dissolvit
 et in hospicium suum
 benignissime recolle-
 git, pro quo Bachus
 quodcunque munus
 rex exigere vellet do-
 nare concessit. Unde
 rex avaricia ductus,
 ut quicquid tangeret
 in aurum convertere-
 tur, indiscrete peciit.
 Quo facto postea con-
 tigit, quod cibos cum
 ipse sumere vellet in
 aurum conversos
 manducare non po-
 tuit. Et sic percipi-
 ens aurum pro tunc
 non posse sibi valere
 illud auferri et tunc
 ea, que victui suffice-
 rent necessaria, itera-
 tis precibus a deo mi-
 tissime postulavit.

Bachus, which is the god of wine,
 Accordant unto his divine
 A prest, the which Cillenus hight,
 He had, and fell so, that by night
 This prest was drunke and goth astraied,
 Wherof the men were evil apaied
 In Frigilond, where as he went.
 But ate last a cherle him hent
 With strength of other felaship,
 So that upon his drunke ship
 They bounden him with cheines faste
 And forth they lad him also faste
 Unto the king, which highte Mide.
 But he that wolde his vice hide
 This curteis king toke of him hede
 And bad, that men him shulde lede
 Into a chambre for to kepe,
 Till he of leifer hadde slepe.
 And tho this prest was sone unbound
 And up a couche fro the ground
 To slepe he was laid soft inough.
 And whan he woke, the king him drough
 To his presence and did him chere,
 So that this prest in such manere,

While that him liketh, ther he dwelleth
And al this he to Bachus telleth,
Whan that he cam to him ayein.
And whan that Bachus herde sain,
How Mide hath done his curtesy,
Him thenketh, it were a vilany,
But he reward him for his dede,
So as he might of his godhede.
Unto this king this god appereth
And clepeth, and that other hereth.
This god to Mide thonketh faire
Of that he was so debonaire
Toward his prest, and bad him say
What thinge it were he wolde pray,
He shulde it have of worldes good.
This king was glad and stille stood
And was of his axinge in doubte
And all the worlde he cast aboute,
What thing was best for his estate.
And with him self stood in debate
Upon thre pointes, which I finde
Ben levest unto mannes kinde.
The first of hem it is delite,
The two ben worship and profite.
And than he thought, if that I crave
Delite, though I delite may have,
Delite shall passen in my age
That is no fiker avauntage.
For every joie bodely
Shall ende in wo, delite forthy

Woll I nought chese, and if worship
 I axe and of the world lordship,
 That is an occupation
 Of proude ymagination,
 Which maketh an herte vein withinne,
 There is no certain for to winne,
 For lorde and knave is all o wey,
 Whan they be bore, and whan they deie.
 And if I profite axe wolde,
 I not in what maner I sholde
 Of worldes good have fikerneffe,
 For every thefe upon richesse
 Awaiteth for to robbe and stele.
 Such good is cause of harmes fele,
 And also though a man at ones
 Of all the world within his wones
 The trefor might have every dele,
 Yet had he but one mannes dele
 Toward him self, so as I thinke
 Of clothing and of mete and drinke,
 For more out take vanite
 There hath no lord in his degre.

And thus upon these points diverse
 Diverselich he gan reherce,
 What point it thought him for the best.
 But plainly for to get him rest
 He can no fiker waie cast,
 And nethes yet ate laste
 He fell upon the covetise
 Of gold, and than in sondry wise

He thought, as I have said to-fore,
How tresor may be sone lore,
And hadde an inly great desir
Touchende of such recoverir,
How that he might his cause availe
To gete him gold withoute faile.
Within his hert and thus he preifeth
The gold and faith, how that he peifeth
Above all other metal most,
The gold, he faith, may lede an hoste
To make werre ayein a king,
The gold put under alle thing,
And set it whan him list above,
The gold can make of hate love
And werre of pees and right of wrong
And long to short and short to long,
Withoute gold may be no fest,
Gold is the lord of man and best
And may hem bothe beie and selle,
So that a man may sothly telle
That all the world to golde obeieth.

Forthy this king to Bachus preieth
To graunt him gold, but he exceedeth
Mesure more than him nedeth.
Men tellen, that the malady,
Which cleped is ydropefy
Refembled is unto this vice
By way of kinde of avarice,
The more ydropefy drinketh,
The more him thursteth, for him thinketh,

That he may never drink his fille.
So that there may no thing fulfille
The lustes of his appetite.
And right in such a maner plite
Stant avarice and ever stood,
The more he hath of worldes good,
The more he wolde it kepe streite
And ever more and more coveite,
And right in such condicion
Withoute good discrecion
This king with avarice is smitte,
That all the worlde it mighte witte.
For he to Bachus thanne preide,
That therupon his honde he leide,
It shulde through his touche anone
Become gold, and therupon
This god him graunteth as he bad.
Though was this kinge of Frige glad.
And for to put it in assay
With all the haste that he may
He toucheth that, he toucheth this,
And in his hond all gold it is,
The stone, the tre, the leef, the gras,
The flour, the fruit all gold it was.
Thus toucheth he, while he may laste
To go, but hunger ate laste
Him toke so, that he must nede
By wey of kinde his hunger fede.
The cloth was laid, the bord was set
And all was forth to-fore him set

His dish, his cup, his drink, his mete,
But whan he wolde or drinke or ete
Anone as it his mouth cam nigh
It was all gold, and than he figh
Of avarice the folie.

And he with that began to crie
And preide Bachus to foryive
His gilt and suffre him for to live
And be such, as he was to-fore,
So that he were nought forlore.
This god which herd of this grevaunce
Toke routhe upon his repentaunce
And bad him go forth redely
Unto a flood was faste by,
Which Paceole thanne hight,
In whiche als clene as ever he might
He shuld him washen overall,
And said him thanne that he shall
Recover his first estate ayein.

This king right as he herde fain
Into the flood goth fro the lond
And wissh him bothe fote and hond
And so forth all the remenaunt
As him was set in covenaut,
And than he figh merveiles straunge,
The flood his colour gan to chaunge,
The gravel with the smale stons
To gold they torne both atones,
And he was quite of that he hadde,
And thus fortune his chaunce ladde.

And whan he figh his touch away,
 He goth him home the right wey
 And liveth forth as he did er
 And put all avarice afer
 And the richeffe of gold despiseth
 And faith, that mete and cloth suffiseth.
 Thus hath this king experience,
 How fooles done the reverence
 To gold, which of his owne kinde
 Is lasse worth than is the rinde
 To sustenance of mannes food.
 And than he made lawes good
 And all his thing set upon skille,
 He bad his people for to tille
 Her lond and live under the lawe,
 And that they shulde also forth drawe
 Bestaile and seche none encrees
 Of gold, whiche is the breche of pees.
 For this a man may finde write,
 To-fore the time, er gold was smite
 In coigne, that men the florein knewe,
 There was wel nighe no man untrewē,
 Tho was there nouthur shield ne spere
 Ne dedly wepen for to bere,
 Tho was the town withouten walle,
 Which nowē is closed over alle,
 Tho was there no brocage in lond,
 Which now taketh every cause on hond.
 So may men knowe, how the florein
 Was moder first of malengin

And bringer in of alle werre,
 Wherof this world stant out of herre,
 Through the counseil of avarice,
 Whiche of his owne propre vice
 Is as the helle wonderful,
 For it may nevermore be full,
 That what as ever cometh therinne
 A wey ne may it never winne.

But sone min, do thou nought so,
 Let all suche avarice go
 And take thy part of that thou hast,
 I bidde nought that thou do wast,
 But hold largeffe in his mesure.
 And if thou se a creature,
 Which through pouerte is falle in nede,
 Yef him some good, for this I rede
 To him that wol nought yeven here,
 What peine he shal have elles where,
 There is a pein amonges alle
 Benethe in helle, which men calle
 The wofull peine of Tantaly,
 Of which I shall the redely
 Devise how men therin stonde.
 In helle thou shalt understonde
 There is a flood of thilke office,
 Which serveth all for avarice,
 What man that stonde shall therinne
 He stant up even to the chinne.
 Above his hede also there hongeth
 A fruit, which to that peine longeth,

Nota de pena Tantalii, cujus amarafitis dampnatos torquet avaros.

And that fruit toucheth ever in one
 His overlippe, and therupon
 Such thirst and hunger him assaileth,
 That never his appetite ne faileth.
 But whan he wolde his hunger fede,
 The fruit withdraweth him at nede,
 And though he heve his hede on high,
 The fruit is ever aliche nigh,
 So is the hunger wel the more.
 And also though him thurst fore
 And to the water bowe adown,
 The flood in such condicion
 Availeth, that his drinke arecche
 He may nought. Lo now, whiche a wreche,
 That mete and drinke is him so couth
 And yet ther cometh none in his mouth.
 Lich to the peines of this flood
 Stant avarice in worldes good,
 He hath inough and yet him nedeth,
 For his scarcenesse it him forbedeth
 And ever his hunger after more
 Travailleth him aliche fore,
 So is he peined overall.
 Forthy thy goodes forth withal,
 My sone, loke thou despende,
 Wherof thou might thy self amende
 Both here and eke in other place.
 And also if thou wolt purchace
 To be beloved, thou must use
 Largeffe, for if thou refuse

To yive for thy loves sake,
It is no reson that thou take
Of love, that thou woldest crave.
Forthy if thou wolt grace have,
Be gracious and do largesse,
Of avarice, and the fikenesse
Escheue above all other thinge
And take ensample of Mide the kinge
And of the flood of helle also,
Where is inough of alle wo.
And though there were no matere
But onely that we finden here,
Men oughten avarice eschue,
For what man thilke vice sue,
He gete him self but litel rest.
For how so that the body rest,
The hert upon the gold travaileth,
Whom many a nightes drede assaileth.
For though he ligge a bedde naked,
His herte is evermore awaked
And dremeth, as he lith to slepe,
How besy that he is to kepe
His trefor, that no thefe it stele.
Thus hath he but a wofull wele,
And right so in the same wise,
If thou thy self wolt wel avise,
There be lovers of suche inow,
That wolle unto reson bowe,
If so be that they come above,
Whan they ben maisters of her love

And that they shulden be most glad
 With love, they ben most bestad,
 So fain they wolden it holden all.
 Her herte, her eye is overall,
 And wenen every man be a thefe
 To stele away that hem is lefe,
 Thus through her owne fantasy
 They fallen into jelousy.
 Than hath the ship to-brok his cable
 With every winde and is mevable.

Amans. My fader, for that ye now telle,
 I have herd oftetime telle
 Of jelousy, but what it is
 Yet understode I never er this,
 Wherfore I wolde you besече,
 That ye me wolde enforme and teche
 What maner thing it mighte be.

Confessor. My sone, that is hard to me,
 But netheles as I have herd,
 Now herken and thou shalt be answerd.

Nota de Jelousia,
cuius fantastica sus-
picio amorem
quemvis fidelissi-
mum multociens
sine causa corrup-
tum ymaginatur.

Among the men lack of manhode
 In mariage upon wif-hode
 Maketh that a man him self deceiveth,
 Wherof it is, that he conceiveth
 That ilke unfely malady,
 The whiche is cleped jelousy,
 Of whiche if I the proprete
 Shall telle after the nicete,
 So as it worcheth on a man,
 A fever it is cotidian,

Whiche every day wol come aboute,
Where so a man be in or oute,
At home if that a man wol wone,
This fever is than of comun wone
Most grevous in a mannes eye,
For than he maketh him tote and pry,
Where so as ever his love go,
She shall nought with her litel toe
Misteppe, but he se it all.
His eye is walkend overall,
Where that she finge or that she daunce,
He seeth the left countenaunce,
If she loke on a man aside
Or with him rowne at any tide,
Or that she laugh, or that she loure,
His eye is there at every houre.
And whan it draweth to the night,
If she than be withoute light,
Anone is all the game shent.
For than he set his parlement
To speke it whan he cometh to bed
And saith: If I were now to wed,
I wolde never more have wife.
And so he torneth into strife
The lust of loves duete
And al upon diversite.
If she be freshe and well arraied,
He saith her banner is desplaied
To clepe in gastes by the way,
And if she be nought wel besey

And that her list nought to be glad,
He bereth on honde that she is mad
And loveth nought her husbonde.
He saith, he may wel understonde,
That if she wolde his compaignie,
She shulde than afore his eye
Shew all the plesure that she might,
So that by daie ne by night
She not what thing is for the best,
But liveth out of alle rest.
For what as ever him list to sain,
She dare nought speke o worde ayein,
But wepeth and holt her lippes close.
She may wel write : Sans repose,
The wife, which is to such one married
Of alle women be he waried,
For with his fever of jelousy
His eche daies fantasy
Of sorwe is ever aliche grene,
So that there is no love sene,
While that him list at home abide.
And whan so is he woll out ride,
Than hath he redy his aspy
Abiding in her compaigny
A jangler, an evil mouthed one,
That she ne may no whider gone
Ne speke o word, ne ones loke,
But he ne wol it wende and croke
And torne after his owne entent,
Though she no thing but honour ment.

Whan that the lord cometh home ayein
The jangler must fomwhat fain.
So what withoute and what withinne
This fever is ever to beginne,
For where he cometh he can nought ende,
Til deth of him hath made an ende.
For though so be, that he ne here
Ne fe ne wite in no manere
But all honoure and womanhede,
Therof the jelous taketh none hede,
But as a man to love unkinde
He cast his stafe and as the blinde
And fint defaulte where is none,
As who so dremeth on a stone
How he is laid and groneth ofte,
Whan he lieth on his pilwes softe,
So is there nought but strife and chest,
Whan love shulde make his fest.
It is great thing if he her kisse.
Thus hath she lost the nightes blisse,
For at such time he gruccheth ever
And bereth on honde, there is a lever,
And that she wolde another were
In stede of him abedde there.
And with tho wordes and with mo
Of jelousy he torneth fro
And lith upon his other side,
And she with that draweth her aside
And there she wepeth all the night.
Ha, to what peine she is dight

That in her youth hath so beset
 The bond, which may nought ben unknet.
 I wot the time is ofte cursed,
 That ever was the gold unpurged,
 The which was laid upon the boke,
 Whan that all other she forfoke
 For love of him, but all to late
 She pleigneth, for as than algate
 She mot forbere and to him bowe,
 Though he ne wolde it allowe,
 For man is lord of thilke faire,
 So may the woman but empeire,
 If she speke ought ayein his wille,
 And thus she bereth her peine stille.
 But if this fever a woman take
 She shall be wel more harde shake,
 For though she bothe se and here
 And finde that there is no matere,
 She dare but to her selve pleigne,
 And thus she suffreth double peine.

Confessor. Lo thus, my sone, as I have write,
 Thou might of jelousie wite
 His fever and his condicion,
 Which is full of suspicion.
 But wherof that this fever groweth,
 Who so these olde bokes troweth,
 There may he finde how it is,
 For they us teche and telle this,
 How that this fever of jelousy
 Somdele it groweth of soty

Of love and fomdele of untruft.
For as a fikman leſt his luſt,
And whan he may no favour gete,
He hateth than his owne mete,
Right ſo this feverous malady,
Which cauſed is of fantaſy,
Maketh the jelous in feble plite
To leſe of love his appetite
Through feigned enformacion
Of his ymaginacion.
But finally to taken hede
Men may wel make a liklyhede
Betwene him, whiche is avarous
Of golde, and him that is jelous
Of love, for in o degre
They ſtonde both, as ſemeth me,
That one wold have his bagges ſtill
And nought departen with his will
And dare nought for the theves ſlepe,
So faine he wolde his trefor kepe,
That other may nought well be glad,
For he is evermore adrad
Of theſe lovers, that gone aboute
In aunter, if they put him oute.
So have they bothe litel joy
As wel of love as of money.

Now haſt thou, ſone, of my teching
Of jelouſy a knouleching,
That thou might underſtonde this,
Fro whenne he cometh and what he is,

And eke to whom that he is like.
 Beware forthy thou be nought fike
 Of thilke fever, as I have spoke,
 For it woll in him self be wroke.
 For love hateth no thing more,
 As men may finde by the lore
 Of hem, that whilom were wise,
 How that they speke in many wise.

Amans. My fader, soth is that ye sain,
 But for to loke there ayein
 Before this time how it is falle,
 Wherof there might ensample falle
 To fuche men as ben jelous
 In what maner it is grevous,
 Right fain I wolde ensample here.

Confessor. My gode sone, at thy praier
 Of fuche ensamples as I finde,
 So as they comen now to minde
 Upon this point of time gone,
 I thenke for to tellen one.

Hic ponit exemplum
 contra istos maritos,
 quos jelousia macula-
 vit, et narrat, qualiter
 Vulcanus, cuius uxor
 Venus extitit, suspi-
 cionem inter ipsam et
 Martem concipiens
 eorum gestus diligen-
 cius explorabat, unde
 contigit, quod cum
 ipse quadam vice am-
 bos inter se pariter
 amplexantes in lecto
 nudos invenit, ex-
 clamans omnem ce-
 lum deorum et dea-

Ovide wrote of many thinges,
 Among the whiche in his writinges
 He told a tale in poesye,
 Which toucheth unto jelousye
 Upon a certain cas of love.
 Among the goddes al above
 It felle at thilke time thus.
 The god of fire, which Vulcanus
 Is hote and hath a craft forth with
 Assigned for to be the smith

Of Jupiter, and his figure
Both of visage and of stature
Is lothly and malgracious.
But yet he hath within his hous
As for the liking of his life
The faire Venus to his wife.
But Mars, which of batailles is
The god, an eye had unto this,
As he which was chivalerous.
It felle him to ben amorous,
And thought it was a great pite
To se so lusty one as she
Be coupled with so lourd a wight,
So that his peine day and night
He did, if he her winne might.
And she, that had a good insight
Toward so noble a knightly lord,
In love fel of his accord.
There lacketh nought but time and place,
That he nis fiker of her grace.
But whan two hertes fallen in one,
So wise a wait was never none,
That at sometime they ne mete.
And thus this faire lusty swete
With Mars hath ofte compaigny.
But thilke unkinde jelousy,
Which evermore the herte opposeth,
Maketh Vulcanus, that he supposeth,
That it is nought wel overall,
And to him self he said, he shall

rum ad tantum spectaculum convocavit, super quo tamen derisum potius quam remedium a tota cohorte consecutus est.

Aspie better, if that he may.
And so it felle upon a day,
That he this thing so slightly ledde,
He founde hem bothe two abedde,
All warme, echone with other naked.
And he with crafte all redy maked
Of stronge cheines hath hem bounde,
As he to-gider hem had founde,
And lefte hem both ligge so
And gan to clepe and crie tho
Unto the goddes all aboute.
And they asssembled in a route
Come all at ones for to se,
But none amendes hadde he,
But was rebuked here and there
Of hem, that loves frendes were,
And saiden that he was to blame,
For if there felle him any shame
It was through his misgovernance,
And thus he losse contenance
This god and let his cause falle.
And they to scorne him laughen alle
And losen Mars out of his bondes.
Wherof these erthely husbondes
For ever might ensample take,
If suche a chaunce hem overtake.
For Vulcanus his wife bewraide,
The blame upon him self he laide,
Wherof his shame was the more,
Whiche oughte for to ben a lore.

For every man, that liveth here,
To reulen him in this matere,
Though such an happe of love asterte,
Yet shuld he nought apoint his herte
With jelousy of that is wrought,
But feigne, as though he wist it nought.
For if he let it over passe,
The sclaunder shall be wel the lasse,
And he the more in ese stonde.
For this thou might well understonde,
That where a man shall nedes lese,
The leste harme is for to chese.
But jelousy of his untrist
Maketh that ful many an harme arist,
Which elles shulde nought arise.
And if a man him wolde avise
Of that befelle to Vulcanus,
Him ought of reson thenke thus,
That sith a god was therof shamed,
Wel shuld an erthely man be blamed
To take upon him suche a vice.

Forthy my sone, in thine office
Beware, that thou be nought jelous,
Whiche ofte time hath shent the hous.

Confessor.

My fader, this ensample is hard,
How such thing to the hevenward
Among the goddes mighte falle.
For there is but o god of alle,
Which is the lord of heven and helle.
But if it like you to telle

Amans.

How fuche goddes come aplace,
Ye mighten mochel thank purchase,
For I shall be wel taught withall.

Confessor. My sone, it is thus overall
With hem, that stonden misbeleved,
That fuche goddes ben beleved
In sondry place, sondry wise
Amonges hem, which be unwise,
There is betaken of credence,
Wherof that I the difference
In the maner as it is write
Shall do the plainly for to wite.

z. *Gentibus illufis fignantur templa deorum,
Unde deos cecos nacio ceca colit.
Nulla creatori racio facit effe creatum
Equiparans, quoad buc jura pagana fivent.*

Quia fecundum poetarum fabulas in huiusmodi libelli locis quampluribus nomina et gestus deorum falforum intitulantur, quorum infidelitas ut Criftianis clarius innotefcat, intendit de ipforum origine fecundum varias paganorum sectas fcribere, confequenter et primo defefta Caldeorum tractare proponit.

Er Crift was bore among us here
Of the beleves, that tho were,
In four formes thus it was.
They of Caldee, as in this cas,
Had a beleve by hem felve,
Which stood upon the signes twelve,
Forth eke with the planetes feven,
Whiche as they fighen upon the heven
Of sondry constellacion
In her ymaginacion
With sondry kerfe and portreture
They made of goddes the figure.
In thelementes and eke also
They hadden a beleve tho.

And all was that unrefonable,
 For thelementes ben fervicable
 To man. And ofte of accidence,
 As men may fe the experience,
 They ben corrupt by fondry way,
 So may no mannes refon fay,
 That they ben god in any wife.
 And eke if men hem wel avife,
 The fonne and mone eclipsen both,
 That be hem lef or be hem loth
 They fuffre, and what thing is paffible
 To ben a god is impossible.

Thefe elements ben creatures,
 So ben thefe hevenly figures,
 Wherof may wel be justified,
 That they may nought ben deified.
 And who that taketh away thonour,
 Which due is to the creatour,
 And yiveth it to the creature,
 He doth to great a forfeiture.
 But of Caldee netheles
 Upon this feith though it be leffe
 They holde affermed the creaunce,
 So that of helle the penaunce
 As folk, which ftant out of beleve,
 They fhall receive, as we beleve.

Of the Caldeus fo in this wife
 Stant the beleve out of affife.
 But in Egipthe worft of alle
 The feith is fals, how fo it falle,

Et nota, quod
 Nembroth quartus
 a Noe ignem tam-
 quam deum in
 Caldea primus
 adorari decrevit.

De fefta Egipcio-
 rum.

For they diuerſe beſtes there
 Honour, as though they goddeſſe were.
 And netheleſſe yet forth withall
 Thre goddeſſe moſt in ſpeciall
 They haue forth with a goddeſſe,
 In whome is all her ſikerneſſe.
 Tho goddeſſe be yet cleped thus
 Orus, Tiphon and Ifirus.
 They were brethren alle thre
 And the goddeſſe in her degre
 Her ſuſter was and Yſis hight,
 Whom Ifirus forlay by night
 And helde her after as his wife.
 So it befell, that upon ſtrife
 Tiphon hath Ifre his brother ſlain,
 Which had a child to ſone Orain,
 And he his faders deth to herte
 So toke, that it may nought aſterte,
 That he Tiphon after ne ſlough,
 Whan he was ripe of age inough.
 But yet thegipcienſ trowe
 For all this errour, which they knowe,
 That theſe brethern ben of might
 To ſette and kepe Egipt upright
 And overthrowe, if that hem like.
 But Yſis, as faith the cronique,
 Fro Grece into Egipte cam
 And ſhe than upon honde nam
 To teche hem for to ſowe and ere,
 Which no man knew to-fore there.

And whanne thegipcians figh
 The felde full afore her eye,
 And that the lond began to greine,
 Which whilom hadde be bareine,
 For therthe bare after the kinde
 His due charge, this I finde,
 That she of berthe the goddesse
 Is cleped, so that in distresse
 The women therupon childing
 To her clepe and her offring
 They beren, whan that they ben light.
 Lo, howe Egypt all out of fight
 Fro reson stant in misbeleve
 For lacke of lore as I beleve.

Among the Grekes out of the wey
 As they that reson put away
 There was, as the cronique saith,
 Of misbeleve an other feith,
 That they her goddes and goddeses
 As who saith token all to gesses
 Of suche as weren full of vice,
 To whom they made sacrifice.

The highe god, so as they saide,
 To whom they moste worship laide,
 Saturnus hight and king of Crete
 He hadde be. But of his sete
 He was put down as he, which stood
 In frenesye and was so wode,
 That fro his wife, which Rea hight,
 His owne children he to plight

De secta Greco-
rum.

Nota, qualiter Sa-
turnus deorum
summus appella-
tur.

And ete hem of his comune wone.
 But Jupiter, which was his sone
 And of full age, his fader bonde
 And kut of with his owne honde
 His genitals, whiche also faste
 Into the depe see he caste,
 Wherof the Grekes afferme and say
 Thus, whan they were cast away,
 Came Venus forth by wey of kinde.
 And of Saturne also I finde,
 Howe afterwarde into an ile
 This Jupiter him didde exile,
 Where that he stood in great mischefe.
 Lo, what a god they maden chefe.
 And sithen that suche one was he,
 Which stood most high in his degre
 Among the goddes, thou might know
 These other, that ben more low,
 Ben litel worth, as it is founde.

Jupiter deus deli-
 ciarum.

For Jupiter was the secounde,
 Whiche Juno had unto his wife.
 And yet a lechour all his life
 He was and in avouterie
 He wrought many a trecherie.
 And for he was so full of vices,
 They cleped him god of delices,
 Of whom if thou wolt more wite
 Ovide the poete hath write.
 But yet her sterres bothe two
 Saturne and Jupiter also

They have, although they ben to blame,
Attitled to her owne name.

Mars was an other in that lawe,
The which in Dace was forth drawe,
Of whom the clerk Vegecius
Wrote in his boke and tolde thus,
Howe he into Itaile came
And such fortune there he nam,
That he a maiden hath oppressed,
Whiche in her ordre was professed
As she, which was the prioressse
In Vestes temple the goddesse,
So was she well the more to blame.
Dame Ylia this lady name
Men clepe, and eke she was also
The kinges doughter, that was tho,
Which Minitor by name hight.
So that ayein the lawes right
Mars thilke time upon her that
Remus and Romulus begat,
Whiche after, whan they come in age,
Of knighthode and of vassellage
Itaile al hole they overcome
And foundeden the grete Rome.
In armes and of suche emprise
They weren, that in thilke wise
Her fader Mars for the merveile
The god is cleped of bataile.
They were his children bothe two,
Through hem he toke his name so,

Mars deus belli.

There was none other cause why.
 And yet a sterre upon the sky
 He hath unto his name applied,
 In which that he is signified.

Apollo deus sapiens.

An other god they hadden eke,
 To whom for counseil they beseke,
 The which was brother to Venus,
 Apollo men him clepe thus.
 He was an hunt upon the hilles,
 There was with him no vertue elles,
 Wherof that any bokes carpe,
 But only that he couthe harpe,
 Which whan he walked over londe
 Full ofte time he toke on honde
 To get him with his sustenance
 For lack of other purveance.
 And otherwhile of his falshe
 He feigneth him to conne arede
 Of thing, which afterward shuld falle,
 Wherof among his sleighes alle
 He hath the leude folk deceived,
 So that the better he was received.
 Lo now, through what creacion
 He hath deificacion
 And cleped is the god of wit,
 To suche as be the fooles yet.

*Mercurius deus
 mercatorum et fur-
 torum.*

An other god, to whom they fought,
 Mercurie hight, and him ne rought
 What thing he stole, ne whom he slough.
 Of forcery he couthe inough,

That whan he wold him self transforme,
Full ofte time he toke the forme
Of woman and his owne leste.
So did he well the more thefte.
A great speker in alle thinges
He was also and of lesinges
An autor, that men wiste none
An other suche as he was one.
And yet they maden of this thefe
A god, which was unto hem lese,
And cleped him in tho beleves
The god of marchants and of theves.
But yet a sterre upon the heven
He hath of the planetes seven.

But Vulcanus, of whom I spake,
He had a courbe upon the back,
And therto he was hippe-halt,
Of whom thou understonde shalt,
He was a shrewe in al his youth
And he none other vertue couth
Of craft to helpe him selve with
But only that he was a smith
With Jupiter, whiche in his forge
Diverse thinges made him forge,
So wote I nought for what desire
They clepen him the god of fire.

King of Cicile Ypolitus
A sone he had, and Eolus
He hight, and of his faders graunt
He held by way of covenaut

Eolus deus ventorum.

The governaunce of every ile,
 Which was longend unto Cicile
 Of hem that fro the lond forein
 Lay ope the winde alle pleine.
 And fro thilke iles into the londe
 Full ofte cam the wind to honde,
 After the name of him forthy
 The windes cleped Eoly
 They were, and he the god of winde.
 Lo now, how this beleve is blinde.

Neptunus
 maris.

deus

The king of Crete Jupiter,
 The same, whiche I spake of er,
 Unto his brother, which Neptune
 Was hote, it list him to comune
 Parte of his good, so that by ship
 He made him stronge of the lordship
 Of all the see in tho parties,
 Where that he wrought his tirannies,
 And the straunge iles aboute
 He wan, that every man hath doubte
 Upon his marche for to saile.
 For he anone hem wolde assaile
 And robbe what thing that they ladden,
 His sauf conduit but if they hadden.
 Wherof the comun vois aros
 In every lond, that suche a los
 He caught, all nere it worth a stre,
 That he was cleped of the see
 The god by name, and yet he is
 With hem, that so beleve amis.

This Neptune eke was thilke also,
Which was the firste founder tho
Of noble Troy, and he forthy
Was well the more lette by.

The loresman of the shepherdes
And eke of hem, that ben netherdes,
Was of Archade and highte Pan,
Of whom hath spoke many a man.
For in the wode of Nonartigne
Enclosed with the trees of pigne
And on the mount of Parafie
He had of bestes the bailie,
And eke beneth in the valey,
Where thilke river, as men may say,
Which Ladon highte, made his cours,
He was the chefe of governours
Of hem, that kepten tame bestes,
Wherof they maken yet the festes
In the citee of Stimfalides.

Pan deus nature.

And forth withall yet netheles
He taughte men the forth drawing
Of bestaile and eke the making
Of oxen and of hors the same,
How men hem shulde ride and tame,
Of foules eke, so as we finde,
Full many a subtil craft of kinde
He found, which no man knew to-fore.
Men did him worship eke therfore,
That he the first in thilke londe
Was, which the melodie fonde

Of reedes, whan they weren ripe,
 With double pipes for to pipe.
 Therof he yaf the firste lore,
 Till afterward men couthe more,
 To every crafte of mannes helpe
 He had a redy wit to helpe
 Through natural experience.
 And thus the nice reverence
 Of fooles, whan that he was dede,
 The foot was torned to the hede
 And clepen him god of nature,
 For so they maden his figure.

Bachus deus vini.

An other god, so as they fele,
 Whiche Jupiter upon Semele
 Begat in his avouterie,
 Whom for to hide his lecherie
 That none therof shall take kepe
 In a mountaigne for to kepe,
 Which Dion hight and was in Ynde,
 He fend, in bokes as I finde,
 And he by name Bachus hight,
 Which afterward, whan that he might,
 A waftor was and all his rent
 In wine and bordel he despent.
 But yet all were he wonder bad,
 Among the Grekes a name he had,
 They cleped him the god of wine,
 And thus a gloton was divine.

Eſculapius
 medicine.

deus

There was yet Eſculapius
 A god in thilke time as thus.

His craft stood upon surgerie,
But for the luste of lecherie,
That he to Daires doughter drough,
It fell, that Jupiter him slough.
And yet they made him nought forthy
A god and wist no cause why.
In Rome he was long time so
A god among the Romans tho,
For as he saide of his prefence
There was destruied a pestilence,
Whan they to thile of Delphos went.
And that Apollo with him sent
This Esculapius his sone
Among the Romans for to wone,
And there he dwelte for a while,
Till afterwarde into that ile,
Fro when he cam, ayeine he torneth,
Where all his life that he sojorneth
Among the Grekes, till that he deiede.
And they upon him thanne leide
His name and god of medicine
He hatte after that ilke line.

An other god of Hercules
They made, which was netheles
A man, but that he was so stronge
In al this world that brode and longe
So mighty was no man as he.
Merveiles twelve in his degre,
As it was couth in sondry londes,
He dide with his owne hondes

Hercules deus fortitudinis.

Ayein geaunts and monstres both,
 The whiche horrible were and loth.
 But he with strength hem overcam,
 Wherof so great a price he nam,
 That they him clepe amonges alle
 The god of strengthe and to him calle.
 And yet there is no reson inne,
 For he a man was full of sinne,
 Which proved was upon his ende,
 For in a rage him self he brende.
 And suche a cruell mannes dede
 Accordeth nothing with godhede.

Pluto deus inferni.

They had of goddes yet an other,
 Which Pluto hight, and was the brother
 Of Jupiter, and he fro youth
 With every word, which cam to mouth,
 Of any thing, whan he was wroth,
 He wolde swere his comun othe
 By Lethen and by Flegeton,
 By Cochitum and Acheron,
 The whiche after the bokes telle
 Ben the chefe floodes of the helle,
 By Segne and Stige he swore also,
 That ben the depe pittes two
 Of helle, the most principall.
 Pluto these othes over all
 Swore of his comun custumaunce,
 Till it befelle upon a chaunce,
 That he for Jupiters sake
 Unto the goddes let do make

A sacrifice, and for that dede
One of the pittes for his mede
In hell, of whiche I spake of er,
Was graunted him, and thus he there
Upon the fortune of this thinge
The name toke of helle kinge.

Lo, these goddes and well mo
Among the Grekes they had tho,
And of goddesse many one,
Whose names thou shalt here anone,
And in what wise they deceiven
The fooles, whiche her feith receiven.

So as Saturne is soveraine
Of false goddes, as they faine,
So is Sibeles of goddesse
The moder, whom withoute gesse
The folke prein honour and serve
As they, the whiche her lawe observe.
But for to knowen upon this,
Fro when she cam and what she is,
Bethincia the contre hight,
Where she cam first to mannes sight.
And after was Saturnes wife,
By whom thre children in her life
She bare, and they were cleped tho
Juno, Neptunus and Pluto,
The which of nice fantasy
The people wolde deify.
And for her children weren so
Sibeles thanne was also

Nota, qualiter Si-
beles dearum mater
et origo nuncupa-
tur.

Made a goddesse, and they her calle
 The moder of the goddes alle.
 So was that name bore forth,
 And yet the cause is litel worth.

*Juno dea regno-
 rum et diviciarum.*

A vois unto Saturne tolde,
 How that his owne sone him sholde
 Out of his regne put away,
 And he because of thilke wey,
 That him was shap suche a fate,
 Sibeles his wife began to hate
 And eke her progenie bothe.
 And thus while that they were wrothe
 By Philerem upon a day
 In his avouterie he lay,
 On whom he Jupiter begat.
 And thilke child was after that,
 Which wrought al that was prophecied,
 As it to-fore is specified.
 So whan that Jupiter of Crete
 Was king, a wife unto him mete
 The daughter of Sibeles he toke,
 And that was Juno, saith the boke
 Of his deification
 After the fals opinion,
 That have I tolde, so as they mene.
 And for this Juno was the quene
 Of Jupiter and suster eke,
 The fooles unto her seke
 And fain, that she is the goddesse
 Of regnes bothe and of richeffe,

And eke she, as they understonde,
The water nimphes hath in honde
To leden at her owne heste.
And whan her list the sky tempeste,
The reinbowe is her messagere.
Lo, which a misbeleve is here,
That she goddesse is of the sky,
I wot none other cause why.

An other goddesse is Minerve,
To whom the Grekes obey and serve.
And she was nigh the greate lay
Of Triton founde, where she lay
A child for-cast, but what she was
There knew no man the sothe cas.
But in Aufrique she was laide
In the maner as I have saide
And caried fro that ilke place
Into an ile fer in Trace,
The which Pallene thanne hight,
Where a norice hir kepte and dight.
And after for she was so wise,
That she found first in her avise
The cloth making of woll and line,
Men saiden, that she was divine,
And the goddesse of sapience
They clepen her in that credence.

Of the goddesse, which Pallas
Is cleped, sondry speche was.
One faith her fader was Pallaunt,
Whiche in his time was a geaunt,

Minerva dea sapi-
enciarum.

Pallas dea bello-
rum.

A cruell man, a batailous.
 An other faith, how in his hous
 She was the cause, why he deiede.
 And of this Pallas some eke faide
 That she was Martes wife, and so
 Among the men that weren tho
 Of misbeleve in the riot
 The goddesse of batailes hote
 She was, and yet she bereth the name.
 Now loke, how they be for to blame.

Ceres dea frugum.

Saturnus after his exile
 Fro Crete cam in great perile
 Into the londes of Itaile
 And there he dide great merveile,
 Wherof his name dwelleth yit.
 For he founde of his owne wit
 The firste crafte of plough tilling,
 Of ering and of corn sowing,
 And how men shulden sette vines
 And of the grapes make wines.
 All this he taught. And it fell so
 His wife, the which cam with him tho,
 Was cleped Cereres by name,
 And for she taught also the same
 And was his wife that ilke throwe,
 As it was to the people knowe,
 They made of Ceres a goddesse,
 In whom her tilthe yet they blesse
 And fain that Tricolonius
 Her sone goth amonges us

And maketh the corn good chepe or dere,
Right as her list from yere to yere,
So that this wife because of this
Goddesse of cornes cleped is.

King Jupiter, which his liking
Whilom fulfilled in alle thing,
So priveliche about he ladde
His lust, that he his wille hadde
Of Latona and on her that
Diane his doughter he begat
Unknowen of his wife Juno.
But afterward she knewe it so,
That Latona for drede fled
Into an ile, where she hid
Her wombe, which of childe aros.
Thilke ile cleped was Delos,
In which Diana was forth brought
And kept so, that her lacketh nought.
And after whan she was of age,
She toke none hede of mariage,
But out of mannes compaigny
She toke her all to venery
In forest and in wilder nesse,
For there was all her besynesse
By day and eke by nightes tide
With arwes brode under the side
And bow in honde, of which she slough
And toke all that her list inough
Of bestes, which ben chaceable,
Wherof the cronique of this fable

Diana dea monci-
um et silvarum.

Saith that the gentils most of alle
 Worshippen her, and to her calle
 And the goddesse of high hilles,
 Of grene trees, of freshe welles
 They clepen her in that beleve,
 Which that no reson may acheve.

Proserpina dea infernorum.

Proserpina, which doughter was
 Of Cereres, befell this cas,
 While she was dwelling in Cicile,
 Her moder in that ilke while
 Upon her blessing and her heft
 Bad, that she shulde ben honest
 And lerne for to weve and spinne
 And dwelle at home and kepe her inne.
 But she cast all that lore away,
 And as she went her out to play
 To gader floures in a pleine,
 And that was under the mountaigne
 Of Ethna, fell the same tide
 That Pluto cam that waie ride.
 And sodeinly, er she was ware,
 He toke her up into his chare,
 And as they riden in the felde,
 Her grete beaute he behelde,
 Which was so plesant in his eye,
 That for to holde in compaignie
 He wedded her and helde her so
 To ben his wife for evermo.
 And as thou hast to-fore herd telle,
 How he was cleped god of helle,

So is she cleped the goddesse
Because of him ne more ne lesse.

Lo thus, my sone, as I the tolde
The Grekes whilom by daies olde
Her goddes had in sondry wise,
And through the lore of her apprise
The Romains helden eke the same
And in worshippe of her name
To every god in speciall
They made a temple forth withall
And eche of hem his yeres day
Attitled hadde. And of array
The temples weren than ordeigned
And eke the people was constreigned
To come and done her sacrifice.
The prestes eke in her office
Solempne maden thilke festes.
And thus the Grekes lich to bestes
The men in stede of god honour,
Which mighten nought hem self soccour,
While that they were alive here.
And over this as thou shalt here

The Grekes fulfilled of fantasy
Saïn eke, that of the hilles high
The goddes ben in speciall,
But of her name in generall
They hoten alle Satiry.

There ben of nimphes proprely
In the beleve of hem also,
Oreades they saiden tho

Confessor.

Nota, quod dii
moncium Satirivo-
cantur.

Oreades nimphe
moncium.

Attitled ben to the montaignes.
 And for the wodes in demeines
 Driades filvarum. To kepe tho ben Driades,
 Naiades foncium. Of freshe welles Naiades,
 Nereides marium. And of the nimphes of the see
 I finde a tale in proprete,
 How Dorus whilom king of Grece,
 Whiche had of infortune a piece,
 His wife forth with his doughter alle
 So as the happes shulden falle
 With many a gentilwoman there
 Dreint in the salte see they were,
 Wherof the Grekes that time saiden
 And such a name upon hem laiden,
 Nereides that they ben hote,
 The nimphes whiche that they note
 To regne upon the stremes salte.
 Lo now, if this beleve halte.
 But of the nimphes as they telle,
 In every place where they dwelle
 They ben all redy obeisaunt
 As damifelles attendaunt
 To the goddesſes, whose servise
 They mote obey in alle wise,
 Wherof the Grekes to hem beseke
 With tho, that ben goddesſes eke,
 And have in hem a great credence.
 And yet without experience
 Saufe onely of illufion,
 Which was to hem dampnacion.

For men also that were dede
 They hadden goddes as I rede,
 And tho by name Manes highten,
 To whom ful great honour they dighten,
 So as the Grekes lawe faith,
 Which was ayein the righte feith.

Manes dii mortuorum.

Thus have I tolde a great partie,
 But all the hole progenie
 Of goddes in that ilke time
 To longe it were for to rime.
 But yet of that, which thou hast herde,
 Of misbeleve, howe it hath ferde,
 There is a great diversite.

My fader, right so thenketh me.
 But yet o thinge I you beseche,
 Which stant in alle mennes speche,
 The god and the goddesse of love,
 Of whom ye nothing here above
 Have told ne spoken of her fare,
 That ye me wolde now declare,
 How they first come to that name.

Amans.

My sone, I have it left for shame,
 Because I am her owne preft.
 But for they stonde nigh thy brest
 Upon the shrifte of thy matere,
 Thou shalt of hem the sothe here
 And understond now well the cas.
 Venus Saturnes doughter was,
 Which alle daunger put away
 Of love and found to lust a wey,

Qualiter Cupido et
 Venus deus et dea
 amoris nuncupantur.

So that of her in fondry place
 Diverse men fell into grace,
 And such a lusty life she ladde,
 That she diverse children hadde,
 Now one by this, now one by that.
 Of her it was that Mars begat
 A child, which cleped was Armene,
 Of her cam also Andragene,
 To whom Mercurie father was.
 Anchises begat Eneas
 Of her also, and Ericon
 Biten begatte, and therupon
 Whan that she sigh ther was none other
 By Jupiter her owne brother
 She lay, and he begat Cupide.
 And thilke sone upon a tide,
 Whan he was come unto his age,
 He had a wonder fair visage
 And founde his mother amorous,
 And he was also lecherous.
 So whan they weren bothe alone,
 As he whiche eyen hadde none
 To se reson, his mother kist,
 And she also that nothing wist
 But that, whiche unto his lust belongeth,
 To bene her love him underfongeth.
 Thus was he blinde, and she unwis.
 But netheles this cause it is,
 Which Cupide is the god of love,
 For he his mother derste love,

And she, which thought her lustes fonde,
Diverse loves toke on honde
Wel mo than I the telle here.
And for she wolde her selve skere,
She made comun that disporte
And set a lawe of such a porte,
That every woman mighte take
What man her list and nought forsake
To ben as comun as she wolde.
She was the first also, which tolde,
That women shulde her body felle.
Semiramis so as men telle
Of Venus kepte thilke apprise.
And so did in the same wise
Of Rome faire Neabolie,
Which list her body to Regolie.
She was to every man felawe
And held the lust of thilke lawe,
Which Venus of her self beganne,
Wherof that she the name wanne,
Why men her clepen the goddesse
Of love and eke of gentilesse,
Of worldes lust and of plesaunce.
Se now the foule miscreaunce
Of Grekes in thilke time tho,
Whan Venus toke her name so.
There was no cause under the mone
Of which they hadden tho to done,
Of wel or wo where so it was,
That they ne token in that cas

A god to helpe or a goddesse,
Wherof to take my witnesse,

Nota de epistola
Dindimi regis
Bragmannorum
Alexandro magno
directa, ubi dicit,
quod Greci tunc ad
corporis conserva-
cionem pro singulis
membris singulos
deos specialiter ap-
propriari credunt.

The king of Bragman Dindimus
Wrote unto Alifaundre thus
In blaminge of the Grekes feith
And of the misbeleve he saith,
How they for every membre hadden
A sondry god, to whom they spradden
Her armes and of help besoughten.

Minerve for the hede they soughten,
For she was wise, and of a man
The wit and reason which he can
Is in the celles of the brain,
Wherof they made her soverain.

Mercurie, which was in his dawes
A great speker of false lawes,
On him the keping of the tunge
They laiden, whan they speke or funge.

For Bachus was a gloton eke
Him for the throte they beseke,
That he it wolde washen ofte
With suote drinkes and with softe.

The god of shulders and of armes
Was Hercules, for he in armes
The mightiest was to fight,
To him tho limmes they behight.
The god whom that they clepen Mart
The brest to kepe hath for his part,
For with the herte in his ymage
That he addresse to his corage.

And of the galle the goddesse,
 For she was ful of hastinesse,
 Of wrath and light to greve also,
 They made and said, it was Juno.

Cupide, which the brond of fire
 Bare in his hond, he was the fire
 Of the stomack, which boileth ever,
 Wherof the lustes ben the lever.

To the goddesse Cereres,
 Whiche of the corn yaf her encres,
 Upon the feith that tho was take
 The wombes cure was betake.

And Venus through the lechery,
 For whiche they her deify,
 She kepte all down the remenaunt
 To thilke office appertenaunt.

Thus was dispers in sondry wise
 The misbeleve as I devise
 With many an ymage of entaile,
 Of suche as might hem nought availe,
 Forthy withoute lives chere
 Unmighty ben to se or here
 Or speke or do or elles fele,
 And yet the fooles to hem knele,
 Whiche is her owne handes werke.
 Ha lord, how this beleve is derke
 And fer fro resonable wit,
 And netheles they don it yit.
 That was o day a ragged tre
 To morwe upon his mageste

Nota de prima y-
 dorum cultura,
 que ex tribus pre-
 cipue statuis exorta
 est, quarum prima
 fuit illa, quam in
 filii sui memoriam
 quidam princeps
 nomine Ciropha-
 nes a sculptore
 Prometheo fabri-
 cari constituit.

Stant in the temple wel besein,
How might a mannes reson sain,
That such a stock may helpe or greve?
But they, that ben of such beleve
And unto suche goddes calle,
It shall to hem right so befall
And failen ate moste nede.
But if the list to taken hede
And of the first ymage wite,
Petronius therof hath write
And eke Nigargorus also,
And they afferme and write so,
That Prometheus was to-fore
And founde the first craft therefore,
And Cirophanes, as they telle,
Through counseil, which was take in helle,
In remembraunce of his lignage
Let setten up the first ymage.
Of Cirophanes faith the boke,
That he for sorwe, which he toke,
Of that he sigh his sone dede,
Of comfort knew none other rede
But let do make in remembraunce
A faire ymage of his semblaunce
And set it in the market place,
Which openly to-fore his face
Stood every day to done him ese.
And they that thanne wolde plese
The fader, shulden it obey,
Whan that they comen thilke wey.

And of Ninus king of Affire
 I rede, how that in his empire
 He was next after the secound
 Of hem, that first ymages found.
 For he right in semblable cas
 Of Belus, which his fader was
 Fro Nembroth in the righte line,
 Let make of gold and stones fine
 A precious ymage riche
 After his fader evenliche,
 And therupon a law he sette,
 That every man of pure dette
 With sacrifice and with truage
 Honoure shulde thilk ymage,
 So that withinne time it felle
 Of Belus cam the name of Belle,
 Of Bel cam Belzebub and so
 The misbeleve wente tho.

The thrid ymage next to this
 Was, whan the king of Grece Apis
 Was dede, they maden a figure
 In ressemblaunce of his stature.
 Of this king Apis saith the boke,
 That Serapis his name toke,
 In whom through long continuaunce
 Of misbeleve a great creaunce
 They hadden and the reverence
 Of sacrifice and of encence
 To him they made. And as they telle
 Among the wonders that befelle,

Secunda statua fuit
 illa, quam ad sui
 patris Beli cultu-
 ram rex Ninus fi-
 eri et adorari de-
 crevit, et sic de no-
 mine Beli postea
 Bel et Belzebub
 ydolum accrevit.

Tercia statua fuit
 illa, que ad hono-
 rem Apis regis
 Grecorum sculpta
 fuit, cui postea no-
 men Serapis impo-
 nentes ipsum quasi
 deum pagani co-
 luerunt.

Whan Alifaundre fro Candace
Cam ridend in a wilde place
Under an hille a cave he fond,
And Candalus, whiche in that lond
Was bore and was Candaces sone,
Him told, how that of comun wone
The goddes were in thilke cave.
And he that wolde assay and have
A knoueleching, if it be soth,
Light of his hors and in he goth
And fond therinne that he fought.
For through the fendes sleight him thought
Amonges other goddes mo,
That Serapis spake to him tho,
Whom he figh there in great array.
And thus the fend fro day to day
The worship of ydolatrie
Drough forth upon the fantasy
Of hem, that weren thanne blinde
And couthen nought the trouthe finde.
Thus hast thou herd in what degre
Of Grece, Egipte and Caldee
The misbeleves whilom stood,
And how so that they be nought good
Ne trewe, yet they sprongen oute,
Wherof the wide worlde aboute
His parte of misbeleve toke.
Til so befelle, as faith the boke,
That god a people for him selve
Hath chose of the lignages twelve,

Wherof the sothe redely,
As it is write in Genesys,
I thenke telle in suche a wise,
That it shall be to thin apprise.

After the flood, fro which Noe
Was sauf, the worlde in his degre
Was made as who saith new ayein
Of flour, of fruit, of gras, of grein,
Of beest, of brid and of mankinde,
Whiche ever hath be to god unkinde.
For nought withstonding all the fare
Of that this world was made so bare,
And afterward it was restored,
Among the men was nothing mored
Towardes god of good living,
But all was torned to liking
After the flesh, so that foryete
Was he, which yaf hem life and mete,
Of heven and erthe creatour.
And thus cam forth the great errour,
That they the highe god ne knewe,
But maden other goddes newe,
As thou hast herd me said to-fore.
There was no man that time bore,
That he ne had after his chois
A god, to whom he yaf his vois,
Wherof the misbeleve cam
Into the time of Abraham.
But he found out the righte wey,
Howe only men shuld obey

De Hebreorum seu
Judeorum secta,
quorum sinagoga,
ecclesia Christi su-
perveniente, defe-
cit.

The highe god, which weldeth all
 And ever hath done and ever shall
 In heven, in erth and eke in helle.
 There is no tunge his might may telle.
 This patriarch to his lignage
 Forbad, that they to none ymage
 Encline sholden in no wise,
 But her offrende and sacrifice
 With all the hole hertes love
 Unto the mighty god above
 They shulde yive and to no mo.
 And thus in thilke time tho
 Began that sect upon this erthe,
 Whiche of beleves was the ferthe,
 Of rightwisnesse it was conceived,
 So must it nedes be received
 Of him, that alle right is inne,
 The highe god, which wolde winne
 A people unto his owne feith.
 On Abraham the ground he laith
 And made him for to multiply
 Into so great a progeny,
 That they Egipte all over spradde.
 But Pharaο with wrong hem ladde
 In servitude ayein the pees,
 Til god let sende Moises
 To make the deliveraunce.
 And for his people great vengeaunce
 He toke, which is to here a wonder.
 The king was slain, the lond put under,

God bad the redde fee deuide,
Which stood upright on every fide
And yaf unto his people a wey,
That they on foot it passed drey
And gone so forth into desert,
Where for to kepe hem in covert
The daies whan the sonne brent
A large cloude hem over went,
And for to wiffen hem by night
A firy piller hem alight.
And whan that they for hunger pleigne,
The mighty god began to reine
Manna fro heven down to grounde,
Wherof that eche of hem hath founde
His food, fuch right as him list.
And for they shuld upon him trift
Right as who fet a tonne abroche,
He percede the harde roche
And spronge out water all at wille,
That man and beste hath dronk his fille.
And afterward he yaf the lawe
To Moises, that hem withdrawe
They shulde nought fro that he bad.
And in this wise they be lad,
Til they toke in possession
The londes of promission,
Where that Caleph and Josue
The marches upon fuch degre
Departen after the lignage,
That eche of hem as heritage

The highe god, which weldeth all
 And ever hath done and ever shall
 In heven, in erth and eke in helle.
 There is no tunge his might may telle.
 This patriarch to his lignage
 Forbad, that they to none ymage
 Encline sholden in no wise,
 But her offrende and sacrifice
 With all the hole hertes love
 Unto the mighty god above
 They shulde yive and to no mo.
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 Began that sect upon this erthe,
 Whiche of belevs was the ferthe,
 Of rightwisnesse it was conceived,
 So must it nedes be received
 Of him, that alle right is inne,
 The highe god, which wolde winne
 A people unto his owne feith.
 On Abraham the ground he laith
 And made him for to multiply
 Into so great a progeny,
 That they Egipte all over spradde.
 But Pharaο with wrong hem ladde
 In servitude ayein the pees,
 Til god let sende Moises
 To make the deliveraunce.
 And for his people great vengeance
 He toke, which is to here a wonder.
 The king was slain, the lond put under,

God bad the redde see deuide,
Which stood upright on every fide
And yaf unto his people a wey,
That they on foot it passed drey
And gone so forth into desert,
Where for to kepe hem in covert
The daies whan the sonne brent
A large cloude hem over went,
And for to wiffen hem by night
A firy piller hem alight.
And whan that they for hunger pleigne,
The mighty god began to reine
Manna fro heven down to grounde,
Wherof that eche of hem hath founde
His food, fuch right as him list.
And for they shuld upon him trift
Right as who fet a tonne abroche,
He percede the harde roche
And spronge out water all at wille,
That man and beste hath dronk his fille.
And afterward he yaf the lawe
To Moises, that hem withdrawe
They shulde nought fro that he bad.
And in this wise they be lad,
Til they toke in possession
The londes of promission,
Where that Caleph and Josue
The marches upon fuch degre
Departen after the lignage,
That eche of hem as heritage

His purparty hath underfonge.
 And thus stood this beleve longe,
 Whiche of prophetes was governed.
 And they had eke the people lerned
 Of great honour, that shuld hem falle,
 But ate moste nede of alle
 They faileden, whan Crist was bore.
 But how that they her feith have lore,
 It nedeth nought to tellen all,
 The matere is so generall.

Whan Lucifer was best in heven
 And ought most have stonde in even,
 Towardes god he toke debate,
 And for that he was obstinate
 And wolde nought to trouth encline
 He fel for ever into ruine.

And Adam eke in paradys,
 Whan he stood most in all his pris
 After the state of innocence,
 Ayein the god brake his defence
 And fell out of his place away.
 And right by such a maner wey
 The Jewes in her beste plite,
 Whan that they sholden most parfite
 Have stonde upon the prophecy,
 Tho fellen they to most foly
 And him, which was fro heven come
 And of a maid his flessh hath nome
 And was among hem bore and fed,
 As men that wolden nought be sped

Of goddes sone with o vois
 They heng and slough upon the crois,
 Wherof the parfite of her lawe
 Fro thenne forth hem was withdrawe,
 So that they stonde of no merit,
 But in a truage as folk subgit
 Withoute proprete of place
 They liven oute of goddes grace,
 Dispers in alle londes oute.
 And thus the feith is come aboute,
 That whilome in the Jewes stood,
 Whiche is nought parfitliche good.
 To speke as it is now befall
 There is a feith aboven alle,
 In which the trouthe is comprehended,
 Wherof that we ben all amended.

The high almighty mageste
 Of rightwisnesse and of pite
 The finne, which that Adam wrought,
 Whan he figh time ayein he bought
 And send his sone fro the heven
 To sette mannes soule in even,
 Which thanne was so fore fall
 Upon the point which was befall,
 That he ne might him self arise.

Gregoire saith in his apprise :
 It helpeth nought a man be bore,
 If goddes sone were unbore,
 For thanne through the firste finne,
 Which Adam whilom brought us inne,

De fide Christiana,
 in qua perfecte le-
 gis complemen-
 tum, summi misere-
 rii sacramentum
 nostreque salvacio-
 nis fundamentum
 infallibiliter con-
 sistere creditur.

Gregorius. O ne-
 cessarium Ade
 peccatum. O felix
 culpa, que talem
 ac tantum meruit
 habere redempto-
 rem.

There shulden alle men be lost,
 But Crist restoreth thilke lost
 And bought it with his fleshe and blood.
 And if we thenken, how it stood
 Of thilke raunson, which he paid,
 As saint Gregoire it wrote and said,
 All was behovely to the man.
 For that, wherof his wo began,
 Was after cause of all his welth,
 Whan he, which is the welle of helth,
 The highe creatour of life
 Upon the nede of such a strife
 So wolde he for his creature
 Take on him self the forfeiture
 And suffre for the mannes sake.
 Thus may no reson wel forsake,
 That ilke finne original
 Ne was the cause in speciall
 Of mannes worship ate last,
 Which shall withouten ende last.
 For by that cause the godhede
 Asssembled was to the manhede
 In the virgine, where he nome
 Our fleshe and verray man become
 Of bodely fraternite,
 Wherof the man in his degre
 Stant more worth, as I have told,
 Than he stood erst by many fold,
 Through baptisme of the newe lawe,
 Of which Crist lord is and felawe.

And thus the highe goddes might,
 Which was in the virgine alight,
 The mannes soule has reconciled,
 Which hadde longe ben exiled.
 So stant the feith upon beleve,
 Withoute which may non acheve.
 But this beleve is so certain
 To bigge mannes soule ayein,
 So full of grace and of vertu,
 That what man clepeth to Jesu
 In clene life forth with good dede,
 He may nought faile of heven mede,
 Which taken hath the righte feith.
 For elles, as the gospel saith,
 Salvacion there may be none.
 And for to preche therupon
 Crist bad to his apostles alle,
 The whos power as now is falle
 On us, that ben of holy chirche,
 If we the gode dedes werche,
 For feith only sufficeth nought,
 But if good dede also be wrought.

Now were it good, that thou forthy,
 Which through baptisme proprely
 Art unto Cristes feith professed,
 Beware that thou be nought oppressed
 With anticristes lollardie.

For as the Jewes prophecie
 Was set of god for avauntage,
 Right so this newe tapinage

Jacobus. Fides
 sine operibus mor-
 tua est.
 Confessor.

Nota contra istos,
 qui jam Lollardi
 dicuntur.

Of lollardie goth aboute
 To sette Cristes feith in doubte.
 The fainty, that weren us to-fore,
 By whom the feith was first up bore,
 That holy chirche stood releved,
 That oughten better be beleved
 Than these, whiche that men knowe
 Nought holy, though they feigne and blowe
 Her lollardy in mennes ere.
 But if thou wolt live out of fere,
 Such newe lore I rede escheue
 And hold forth right the wey and sue,
 As thin auncestres did er this,
 So shalt thou nought beleve amis.
 Crist wroughte first and after taught
 So that the dede his word araught,
 He yaf ensample in his persone,
 And we tho wordes have alone
 Like to the tree with leves grene,
 Upon the which no fruit is sene.

Incipit Jesus facere
 et docere.

Nota, quod cum
 Anthenor palladi-
 um Troie a templo
 Minerve abstulit,
 Thoas ibidem sum-
 mus sacerdos auro
 corruptus oculos
 avertit et sic ma-
 lum quasi non vi-
 dens scienter fieri
 permisit.

The prest Thoas, which of Minerve
 The temple hadde for to serve
 And the palladion of Troy
 Kept under keie, for monaie
 Of Anthenor, whiche he hath nome,
 Hath suffred Anthenor to come
 And the palladion to stele,
 Wherof the worship and the wele
 Of the Troians was overthrowe.
 But Thoas ate same throwe,

Whan Anthenor this jeuele toke,
Winkende cast away his loke
For a deceipte and for a while,
As he that shuld him self beguile,
He hid his eyen fro the sight
And wende wel, that he so might
Excuse his false conscience.
I wot nought if thilke evidence
Now at this time in her estates
Excuse mighte the prelates,
Knowend how that the feith discrefeth
And alle moral vertu ceseth,
Wherof that they the keies bere.
But yet hem liketh nought to stere
Her goftlich eye for to se
The worlde in his adversite,
They wol no laboure undertake
To kepe that hem is betake.
Crist deide him self for the feith,
But now our ferful prelate saith:
The life is swete, and that he kepeth
So that the feith unholpe slepeth,
And they unto her ese entenden
And in her lust her life despenden,
And every man doth what him list.
Thus stant this world fulfilled of mist,
That no man seeth the righte wey.
The wardes of the chirche key
Through mishandlinge ben miswreint,
The worldes wawe hath welnigh dreint

The ship, which Peter hath to stere,
 The forme is kept, but the matere
 Transformed is in other wise.
 But if they weren goftly wise
 And that the prelats weren good,
 As they by olde daies stood,
 It were thanne litel nede
 Among the men to taken hede
 Of that they heren pseudo telle,
 Which now is come for to dwelle
 To sowe cockel with the corn,
 So that the tilthe is nigh forlorn,
 Which Crist sew first his owne hond.
 Now stant the cockel in the lond,
 Where stood whilom the gode greine,
 For the prelats now, as men sain,
 Forflouthen that they sholden till.
 And that I trowe be the skille,
 Whan there is lacke in hem above,
 The people is straunged to the love
 Of trouth in cause of ignoraunce.
 For where there is no purveaunce
 Of light, men erren in the derke.
 But if the prelats wolden werke
 Upon the feith, which they us teche,
 Men sholden nought her waie seche
 Withoute light as now is used,
 Men se the charge all day refused,
 Whiche holy chirche hath undertake.
 But who that wolde ensample take,

Gregoire upon his Omelie
 Ayein the flouthe of preclacie
 Compleigneth him and thus he saith :
 Whan Peter, fader of the feith,
 At domesday shall with him bring
 Judeam, which through his preching
 He wan, and Andrew with Achay
 Shall come his dette for to pay,
 And Thomas eke with his beyete
 Of Ynde, and Paul the routes grete
 Of sondry londes to present,
 And we fulfilled of londe and rent,
 Whiche of this worlde we holden here,
 With voide hondes shall appere,
 Touchend our cure spirituall,
 Whiche is our charge in speciall,
 I not what thing it may amounte
 Upon thilke ende of our accompte,
 Which Crist him self is auditour,
 Which taketh none hede of vein honour,
 Thoffice of the chauncellerie
 Or of the kinges treforie
 Ne for ne write ne for ne taile
 To warrant may nought than availe.
 The world, which now so wel we trow,
 Shall make us thanne but a mowe,
 So passe we withoute mede,
 That we none otherwise spedde,
 But as we rede, that he spedde,
 The whiche his lordes besant hadde

dea, Andreas cum
 Achaia, Thomas
 cum Yndia, et
 Paulus cum gente
 venient, quid dice-
 mus nos moderni,
 quorum fossum ta-
 lentum pro nichilo
 computabitur.

And therupon gat none encres.
 But at his time netheles,
 What other man his thank deserve,
 The world so lusty is to serve,
 That we with him ben all accorded,
 And that is wist and well recorded
 Through out this erthe in alle londes,
 Let knightes winne with her hondes,
 For oure tunge shall be still
 And stande upon the fleshes will,
 It were a travail for to preche
 The feith of Crist, as for to teche
 The folke painim, it woll nought be.
 But every prelate holde his see
 With alle such as he may gete
 Of lusty drinke and lusty mete,
 Wherof the body fat and full
 Is unto gostly labour dull
 And slough to handle thilke plough.
 But elles we ben swifte inough
 Toward the worldes avarice.
 And that is as a sacrifice,
 Which after that thapostle saith
 Is openly ayein the feith
 Unto the ydols yove and graunted,
 But netheles as it is now haunted
 And vertue chaunged into vice,
 So that largeffe is avarice,
 In whose chapitre now we trete.

Amans. My fader, this matere is bete

So far, that ever while I live
 I shall the better hede yive
 Unto my self by many wey.
 But over this now wolde I prey
 To wite, what the braunches are
 Of avarice, and how they fare
 Als well in love as otherwise.

My sone, and I the shall devise
 In fuche a maner as they stonde,
 So that thou shalt hem understonde.

Confessor.

*Agros jungit agris cupidus domibusque domosque
 Possideat totam sic quasi solus humum.
 Solus et innumeros mulierum spirat amores,
 Ut sacra millenis sit sibi culta Venus.*

3.

Dame avarice is nought soleine,
 Which is of gold the capiteine.
 But of her courte in sondry wise
 After the scole of her apprise
 She hath of servaunts many one,
 Wherof that covetise is one,
 Which goth the large worlde about
 To seche thavauntages out,
 Where that he may the profit winne
 To avarice and bringeth it inne.
 That one halt and that other draweth,
 There is no day which hem bedaweth
 No more the sonne than the mone,
 Whan there is any thing to done,
 And namely with covetise,
 For he stant out of all affise

Hic tractat confessor super illa specie avaricie, que cupiditas dicitur, quam in amoris causa pertractans amanti super hoc opponit.

Of resonable mannes fare,
Where he purposeth him to fare
Upon his lucre and his beyete.
The smalle path, the large strete,
The furlonge and the longe mile,
All is but one for thilke while.
And for that he is such one holde,
Dame avarice him hath witholde,
As he which is the principall
Outward, for he is over all
A purveieur and an espy.
For right as of an hungry py
The storve bestes ben awaited,
Right so is covetise affaited
To loke where he may purchase,
For by his will he wolde embrace
All that this wide world beclippeth.
But ever he somewhat overhippeth,
That he ne may nought all fulfille
The lustes of his gredy wille.
But where it falleth in a londe,
That covetise in mighty honde
Is set, it is full hard to fede.
For than he taketh none other hede,
But that he may purchase and gete,
His conscience hath all foryete
And nought what thing it may amounte,
That he shall afterwarde accompte.
But as the luce in his degre
Of tho, that lasse ben than he,

The fishes gredily devoureth,
 So that no water hem foccoureth,
 Right so no lawe may rescowe
 Fro him, that woll no right allowe.
 For where that such one is of might,
 His will shall stonde in stede of right.
 Thus be the men destrued full ofte,
 Till that the grete god alofte
 Ayein so great a covetise
 Redresse it in his owne wise.
 And in ensample of all tho
 I finde a tale write so,
 The which for it is good to lere
 Herafterward thou shalt it here.

Whan Rome stood in noble plite, ²⁰⁷¹
 Virgile, which was tho parfite,
 A mirrour made of his clergie
 And sette it in the townes eye
 Of marbre on a piller without,
 That they by thritty mile about
 By day and eke also by night
 In that mirrour beholde might
 Her ennemies, if any were,
 With all her ordenaunce there,
 Which they ayein the citee cast.
 So that while thilke mirrour last,
 Ther was no lond, which might acheve
 With werre Rome for to greve,
 Wherof was great envie tho.
 And fell that ilke time so,

Hic ponit exemplum
 contra magnates cu-
 pidos et narrat de
 Craſſo Romanorum
 imperatore, qui tur-
 rim, in qua speculum
 Virgilii Rome fixum
 extiterat, dolosa cir-
 cumventus cupiditate
 evertit, unde non so-
 lum sui ipsius perdi-
 cionem, sed totius ci-
 vitatis intollerabile
 dampnum contingere
 cauſavit.

That Rome hadde werres stronge
Ayein Cartage, and stoden longe
The two citees upon debate.
Cartage figh the strong estate
Of Rome in thilke mirrour stonde
And thought all prively to fonde
To overthrowe it by some wile.
And Hanibal was thilke while
The prince and leader of Cartage,
Which hadde set all his corage
Upon knighthode in such a wise,
That he by worthy and by wise
And by none other was counseiled,
Wherof the world is yet merveiled
Of the maistries that he wrought
Upon the marches, which he fought.
And fell in thilke time also,
The kinge of Puile, which was tho,
Thought ayein Rome to rebelle,
And thus was take the quarelle,
How to destruie the mirrour.
Of Rome tho was emperour
Crassus, which was so covetous,
That he was ever desirous
Of gold to gete the pilage,
Wherof that Puile and eke Cartage
With philosophres wise and great
Beginne of this matere to treat.
And ate last in this degre
There weren philosophres thre

To do this thing whiche undertoke,
And therupon they with hem toke
A great trefure of gold in cofres
To Rome, and thus theſe philoſophres
To-gider in compaignie went,
But no man wiſte what they ment.
Whan they to Rome come were,
So prively they dwelte there,
As they that thoughten to deceive.
Was none, that might of hem perceive,
Till they in fondry ſtedes have
Her gold under the erth begrave
In two trefors that to beholde
They ſholden ſeme as they were olde.
And ſo forth than upon a day
All openly in good array
To themperour they hem preſent
And tolden, it was her entent
To dwellen under his ſerviſe.
And he hem axeth in what wiſe.
And they him told in ſuch a plite,
That eche of hem had a ſpirite,
The which ſlepend anight appereth
And hem by fondry dremes lereth
After the world that hath betid,
Under the grounde if ought be hid
Of olde trefor at any throwe,
They ſhall it in her ſwevenes knowe.
And upon this condition
They ſain, what gold under the town

Of Rome is hid, they woll it finde,
 There shulde nought be left behinde,
 Be so that he the halve dele
 Hem graunt and he assenteth wele.
 And thus cam sleighte for to dwelle
 With covetise as I the telle.
 This emperour bad redely,
 That they be logged faste by,
 Where he his owne body lay.
 And whan it was at morwe day,
 That one of hem saith, that he mette,
 Where he a gold hord shulde fette,
 Wherof this emperour was glad.
 And therupon anone he bad
 His minours for to go and mine,
 And he him self of that covine
 Goth forth withall and at his honde
 The trefor redy there he fonde,
 Where as they said it shulde be.
 And who was thanne glad but he?

Upon that other day secounde
 They have an other gold hord founde,
 Which the seconde maister toke
 Upon his sweven and undertoke.
 And thus the soth experience
 To themperour yaf such credence,
 That all his trust and all his feith
 So fikerliche on hem he laith,
 Of that he found him so releved,
 That they ben parfitly beleved,

As though they were goddes thre.
Now herken the subtilite
The thridd maister shulde mete,
Whiche as they saiden was unmete
Above hem all, and couthe most,
And he withoute noise or boist
All privelich, so as he wolde,
Upon the morwe his swevenes tolde
To themperour right in his ere
And said him, that he wiste where
A trefor was so plenteous
Of golde and eke so precious
Of jewelles and of rich stones,
That unto all his hors at ones
It were a charge suffisaunt.
This lord upon this covenaut
Was glad and axeth where it was.
The maister said, under the glas,
He tolde him eke as for the mine
He wolde ordeigne such engine,
That they the werk shulde underfette
With timber, and withoute lette
Men may the trefor sauflly delve,
So that the mirrour by him selve
Without empeirement shal stonde.
All this the maister upon honde
Hath undertake in alle wey.
This lord, whiche had his wit away
And was with covetise blent,
Anone therto yaf his assent.

And thus they mine forth withall,
The timber set up over all,
Wherof the piller stood upright,
Till it befell upon a night
These clerkes, whan they were ware,
How that the timber only bare
The piller, where the mirrour stood,
Her sleighte no man understood,
They go by night unto the mine
With pitch, with sulphre and rosine,
And whan the citee was aslepe,
A wilde fire into the depe
They cast among the timber werke
And so forth while the night was derke
Desguised in a pouer array
They passeden the towne er day.
And whan they come upon an hille,
They fighen how the mirrour felle,
Wherof they made joy inough,
And eche of hem with other lough
And saiden : Lo, what covetise
May do with hem that be nought wise ?
And that was proved afterwarde,
For every lond to Rome warde,
Whiche hadde be subgit to-fore,
Whan this mirrour was so forlore
And they the wonder herde say,
Anone begunne disobey
With werres upon every fide.
And thus hath Rome lost his pride

And was defouled over all.
For this I finde of Hanibal,
That he of Romans in a day,
Whan he hem found out of array,
So great a multitude slough,
That of gold ringes, which he drough
Of gentil hondes, that ben dede,
Busshelles fulle thre, I rede,
He filled and made a brigge also,
That he might over Tiber go
Upon the corps that dede were
Of the Romans, whiche he slough there.

But now to speke of the juiſe,
The which after the covetiſe
Was take upon this emperour,
For he deſtruied the mirrour,
It is a wonder for to here
The Romans maden a chaire
And ſet her emperour therinne
And ſaiden, for he wolde winne
Of gold the ſuperfluite,
Of golde he ſhulde ſuch plente
Receive, till he ſaide ho.
And with gold, which they hadde tho
Boilende hot within a panne,
Into his mouth they poure thanne.
And thus the thurſt of gold was queint
With gold, whiche hadde ben atteint.

Wherof, my ſone, thou might here,
Whan covetiſe hath loſt the ſtere

Of resonable governaunce,
 There falleth ofte great grevaunce.
 For there may be no worse thing
 Than covetise about a king,
 If it in his persone be,
 It doth the more adversite,
 And if it in his counseil stonde,
 It bringeth all day mischefe to honde
 Of comun harme, and if it growe
 Within his court, it woll be knowe,
 For thanne shall the king be piled.
 The man, whiche hath his londe tilled,
 Awaiteth nought more redely
 The hervest, than they gredily
 Ne maken thanne warde and wacche,
 Where they the profit mighten cacche.
 And yet full oft it falleth so,
 As men may sene among hem tho,
 That he, which most coveiteth fast,
 Hath leest avauntage ate last.
 For whan fortune is there ayein,
 Though he coveite, it is in veine,
 The happes ben nought alle liche,
 One is made pouer, an other riche,
 The court to some it doth profite,
 And some ben ever in o plite.
 And yet they both aliche fore
 Coveite, but fortune is more
 Unto that o part favourable,
 And though it be nought resonable,

This thing a man may sene al day,
 Wherof that I the telle may
 After ensample in remembraunce,
 How every man may take his chaunce
 Or of richesse or of pouerte,
 How so it stonde of the deserte.
 Here is nought every thing acquit,
 For oft a man may se this yit,
 That who best doth, lest thank shal have,
 It helpeth nought the world to crave,
 Whiche out of reule and of mesure
 Hath ever stonde in aventure
 Als well in court, as elles where,
 And how in olde daies there
 It stood so as the thinges felle,
 I thenke a tale for to telle.

In a cronique this I rede 2273
 About a kinge, as must nede,
 There was of knightes and squiers
 Great route and eke of officers.
 Some of long time him hadden served
 And thoughten, that they have deserved
 Avauncement and gone withoute,
 And some also ben of the route,
 That comen but a while agone,
 And they avaunced were anone.
 These olde men upon this thing,
 So as they durst ayein the king
 Among hem self compleignen ofte.
 But there is nothing said so softe,

Hic ponit exem-
 plum contra illos,
 qui in domibus re-
 gum servientes pro
 eo, quod ipsi secun-
 dum eorum cupi-
 ditatem promoti
 non existunt, de
 regio servicio
 quamvis in eorum
 defectu indiscrete
 murmurant.

That it ne cometh out at last.
The king it wist anone als fast
As he, which was of high prudence.
He shope therfore an evidence
Of hem that pleignen in that cas,
To knowe in whose default it was.
And all within his owne entent,
That no man wiste what it ment
Anone he let two cofres make
Of one semblaunce and of o make
So lich, that no life thilke throwe
That one may fro that other knowe.
They were into his chambre brought,
But no man wot why they be wrought.
And netheles the king hath bede,
That they be set in prive stede,
As he that was of wisdom fligh.
Whan he therto his time sigh
All privelich, that none it wist,
His owne hondes that o kist
Of fine golde and of fine perrie,
The which out of his tresorie
Was take, anone he filde full,
That other cofre of strawe and mull
With stones meind he filde also.
Thus be they fulle bothe two.
So that erliche upon a day
He bad withinne where he lay,
There shulde be to-fore his bedde
A borde up set and faire spreadde.

And than he let the cofres fet
Upon the borde and did hem fet.
He knew the names well of tho,
The whiche ayein him grucche so
Both of his chambre and of his halle,
Anone and sende for hem alle
And faide to hem in this wise :

There shall no man his hap despise,
I wot well ye have longe served,
And god wot what ye have deserved.
But if it is along on me
Of that ye unavaunced be
Or elles it belonge on you,
The sothe shall be proved now
To stoppe with your evil worde.
Lo here two cofres on the borde,
Chese whiche you list of bothe two
And witeth well, that one of tho
Is with tresor so full begon,
That if ye hadde therupon,
Ye shal be riche men for ever.
Now chese and take whiche you is lever.
But be well ware, er that ye take,
For of that one I undertake,
There is no maner good therinne,
Wherof ye mighten profit winne.
Now goth to-gider of one assent
And taketh your advisement,
For but I you this day avaunce,
It stant upon your owne chaunce.

All only in default of grace
 So shall be shewed in this place
 Upon you alle well and fine,
 That no defaulte shall be mine.

They knelen all and with one vois
 The king they thonken of this chois.
 And after that they up arise
 And gon aside and hem avise
 And ate laste they accorde,
 Wherof her tale to recorde
 To what issue they be falle
 A knight shall speke for hem alle.
 He kneleth down unto the king
 And saith, that they upon this thing
 Or for to winne or for to lese
 Ben all avised for to chese.

Tho toke this knight a yerd on hond
 And goth there as the cofres stond
 And with thassent of everychone
 He laith his yerde upon one
 And saith the king, how thilke fame
 They chese in reguerdon by name
 And preith him, that they might it have.
 The king, which wold his honour save,
 Whan he hath herd the comun vois,
 Hath graunted hem her owne chois
 And toke hem therupon the key.
 But for he wolde it were fay
 What good they have, as they suppose,
 He bad anone the cofre unclofe,

Which was fulfilled with straw and stones,
 Thus be they served all at ones.
 This king than in the same stede
 Anone that other cofre undede,
 Where as they fighen great richesse
 Wel more than they couthen gesse.
 Lo, saith the king, now may ye se,
 That there is no defaulte in me,
 Forthy my self I woll acquit
 And bereth ye your owne wit
 Of that fortune hath you refused.
 Thus was this wise king excused,
 And they leste of her evil speche
 And mercy of her king beseche.

Somdele to this matere like
 I finde a tale, how Frederike,
 Of Rome that time emperor,
 Herde, as he went, a great clamour
 Of two beggers upon the way,
 That one of hem began to say :
 Ha lord, wel may the man be riche,
 Whom that a king list for to riche.
 That other said no thinge so :
 But he is riche and wel bego,
 To whom that god wol sende wele.
 And thus they maden wordes fele,
 Wherof this lord hath hede nome
 And did hem bothe for to come
 To the paleis, where he shall ete,
 And bad ordeigne for her mete

Nota hic de diviciarum accidentia, ubi narrat, qualiter Fredericus Romanorum imperator duos pauperes audivit litigantes, quorum unus dixit: bene potest ditari, quem rex vult ditare. Et alius dixit: quem deus vult ditare dives erit, que res cum ad experimentum postea probata fuisset, ille qui deum invocabat pastellum auro plenum sortitus est, alius vero caponis pastellum sorte prelegit.

Two pastees which he let do make,
 A capon in that one was bake,
 And in that other for to winne
 Of floreins all that may withinne
 He let do put a great richesse,
 And even aliche as man may gesse
 Outward they were bothe two.
 This begger was commaunded tho,
 He that which held him to the king,
 That he first chese upon this thing.
 He sigh hem, but he felt hem nought,
 So that upon his owne thought
 He chese the capon and forsoke
 That other, which his felaw toke.
 But whan he wist, how that it ferde,
 He said aloud, that men it herde :
 Now have I certainly conceived,
 That he may lightly be deceived,
 That tristeth unto mannes helpe.
 But wel is him, that god wol helpe,
 For he stant on the fiker side,
 Whiche elles shulde go beside.
 I se my felaw wel recouer,
 And I mot dwelle still pouer.
 Thus spake the begger his entent,
 And pouer he cam, and pouer he went,
 Of that he hath richesse fought,
 His infortune it wolde nought.
 So may it shewe in sondry wise
 Betwene fortune and covetise

The chaunce is cast upon a dee,
But yet full oft a man may see
Inough of suche netheles,
Which ever put hem self in pres
To get hem good, and yet they faile.

And for to speke of this entaile
Touchend of love in thy matere,
My gode sone, as thou might here,
That right as it with tho men stood
Of infortune of worldes good,
As thou hast herd me tell above,
Right so full ofte it stant by love,
Though thou coveite it evermore,
Thou shalt nought have o dele the more,
But only that, which the is shape,
The remenaunt is but a jape.
And netheles inough of tho
There ben, that now coveiten so,
That where as they a woman se,
Ye ten or twelve though there be,
The love is now so unavised,
That where the Beaute stant affised,
The mannes herte anone is there
And rouneth tales in her ere
And faith, how that he loveth streite.
And thus he set him to coveite,
An hundred though he sigh a day,
So wolde he more than he may.
So for the grete covetise
Of soty and of fool emprise

In eche of hem he fint somwhat,
 That pleseth him, or this or that.
 Some one, for she is white of skinne,
 Some one, for she is noble of kinne,
 Some one, for she hath a rody cheke,
 Some one, for that she semeth meke,
 Some one, for she hath eyen grey,
 Some one, for she can laugh and pley,
 Some one, for she is longe and small,
 Some one, for she is lite and tall,
 Some one, for she is pale and bleche,
 Some one, for she is softe of speche,
 Some one, for that she is camused,
 Some one, for she hath nought ben used,
 Some one, for she can daunce and sing,
 So that some thing of his liking
 He fint, and though no more he sele,
 But that she hath a litel hele,
 It is inough, that he therfore
 Her love, and thus an hundred score,
 While they be new, he wolde he had,
 Whom he forsaketh, she shall be bad.
 The blinde man no colour demeth,
 But all is one right as him semeth,
 So hath his lust no jugement,
 Whom covetise of love blent.
 Him thenketh, that to his covetise,
 How all the world ne may suffise,
 For by his will he wolde have all,
 If that it mighte so befall.

Cecus non judicat
 de coloribus.

So is he comun as the strete,
I sette nought of his beyete.

My sone, hast thou such covetise?

Confessor.

Nay fader, such love I despise,

Amans.

And while I live shal don ever,

For in good feith yet had I lever

Than to coveite in suche a wey

To ben for ever till I deie

As pouer as Job and loveles

Out taken one, for haveles

His thonkes is no man alive,

For that a man shulde all unthrive,

There ought no wise man coveite,

The lawe was nought set so streite.

Forthy my self with all to save

Suche one there is I wolde have

And none of all this other mo.

My sone, of that thou woldest so,

Confessor.

I am nought wroth, but over this

I woll the tellen, howe it is.

For there be men, which other wise

Right only for the covetise

Of that they seen a woman riche,

There wol they all her love affiche.

Nought for the Beaute of her face

Ne yet for vertu ne for grace,

Which she hath elles right inough,

But for the parke and for the plough

And other thing, which therto longeth,

For in none other wise hem longeth

To love, but they profit finde.
 And if the profit be behinde,
 Her love is ever lesse and lesse,
 For after that she hath richesse,
 Her love is of proportion.
 If thou hast such condition,
 My sone, tell right as it is.

Confessio amantis. Min holy fader, nay iwis,
 Condicion such have I none.
 For truly fader, I love one
 So well, with all min hertes thought,
 That certes though she hadde nought
 And were as pouer as Medea,
 Which was exiled for Creusa,
 I wolde her nought the lasse love,
 Ne though she were at her above,
 As was the riche quene Candace,
 Which to deserve love and grace
 To Alisaundre, that was king,
 Yaf many a worthy riche thing,
 Or elles as Pantasilee,
 Which was the quene of Feminee
 And great richesse with her nam,
 Whan she for love of Hector cam
 To Troy, in rescouffe of the town,
 I am of such condicion,
 That though my lady of her selve
 Were also riche, as suche twelve,
 I couthe nought, though it were so,
 No better love her, than I do.

For I love in so pleine a wife,
That for to speke of covetise
As for pouerte or for richesse,
My love is nouthere more ne lesse.
For in good feith I trowe this,
So covetous no man there is,
For why and he my lady sigh,
That he through loking of his eye
Ne shuld have such a stroke withinne,
That for no gold he mighte winne
He shulde nought her love asterte,
But if he lefte there his herte
Be so it were such a man,
That couthe skille of a woman.
For there ben men so rude some,
Whan they among the women come,
They gon under protection,
That love and his affection
Ne shal nought take hem by the fleve,
For they ben out of that beleve,
Hem lusteth of no lady chere,
But ever thenken there and here,
Where that her golde is in the cofre
And wol none other love profer.
But who so wot what love amounteth
And by reson truliche accompteth,
Than may he knowe and taken hede,
That all the lust of womanhede,
Which may ben in a ladies face,
My lady hath and eke of grace,

If men shuld yiven her apprise,
 They may wel say, how she is wise
 And sober and simple of countenaunce
 And all that to good governaunce
 Belongeth of a worthy wight
 She hath plainly. For thilke night
 That she was bore as for the nones
 Nature fet in her at ones
 Beaute with bounte so besein,
 That I may well afferme and sain,
 I figh yet never creature
 Of comly hede and of feture
 In any kinges region
 Be liche her in comparison.
 And therto, as I have you tolde,
 Yet hath she more a thousand folde
 Of bounte, and shortly to telle
 She is pure hede and welle
 And mirrour and ensample of good,
 Who so her vertues understood
 Me thenketh it ought inough suffise
 Withouten other covetise
 To love fuche one and to serve,
 Which with her chere can deserve
 To be beloved better iwis,
 Than she par cas that richest is
 And hath of golde a million.
 Suche hath be min opinion
 And ever shall. But netheles
 I say she is nought haveles,

That she nis riche and well at ese
 And hath inough, wherwith to plesse
 Of worldes good, whom that her list.
 But o thing wold I wel ye wist,
 That never for no worldes good
 Min hert unto ward her stood,
 But only right for pure love,
 That wot the highe god above.
 Now fader, what say ye therto?

My sone, I say it is wel do.

Confessor.

For take of this right good beleve,
 What man that wol him self releve
 To love, in any other wise
 He shall wel finde his covetise,
 Shall fore greve him ate laste,
 For such a love may nought laste.
 But now men sain in oure daies,
 Men maken but a few assaies,
 But if the cause be richeffe
 Forthy the love is well the lesse.
 And who that wold ensamples telle
 By olde daies as they felle,
 Than might a man wel understonde
 Such love may nought longe stonde.
 Now herken, sone, and thou shalt here
 A great ensample of this matere.

To trete upon the cas of love,
 So as we tolden here above,
 I finde write a wonder thing.
 Of Puile whilom was a king,

Hic ponit exemplum
 contra istos, qui non
 propter amorem sed
 propter divicias spon-
 salia sumunt. Et
 narrat de quodam
 regis Apulie senef-

calo, qui non solum
propter pecuniam ux-
orem duxit, sed etiam
pecunie commercio
uxorem sibi desponsa-
tam vendidit.

A man of high complexion
And yong, but his affection
After the nature of his age
Was yet not falle in his corage
The lust of women for to knowe.
So it betid upon a throwe,
This lord fell into great sikenesse.
Phisique hath done the besinesse
Of sondry cures many one
To make him hole and therupon
A worthy maister, which there was,
Yaf him counseil upon this cas,
That if he wolde have parfite hele,
He shulde with a woman dele,
A freshe, a yonge, a lusty wight
To don him compaigny a night.
For than he said him redely,
That he shal be al hole therby,
And other wise he knew no cure.
The king, which stood in aventure
Of life and deth for medicine,
Assented was and of covine
His steward, whom he trusteth well,
He toke and told him every dele,
How that this maister hadde said.
And therupon he hath him praid
And charged upon his legeaunce,
That he do make purveaunce
Of such one as be covenable
For his plesaunce and delitable

And badde him, how that ever it stood,
That he shall spare for no good,
For his will is right well to pay.
The steward said, he wolde assay.

But now here after thou shalt wite,
As I finde in the bokes write,
What covetise in love doth.
This steward, for to telle soth,
Amonges all the men alive
A lusty lady hath to wive,
Which netheles for gold he toke
And nought for love, as faith the boke.
A riche marchaunt of the londe
Her fader was, and he her fonde
So worthely and such richesse
Of worldes good and such largesse
With her he yaf in mariage,
That only for thilke avauntage
Of good the steward hath her take
For lucre and nought for loves sake.
And that was afterward wel sene.
Nowe herken, what it wolde mene.
This steward in his owne hert
Sigh, that his lord may nought astert
His maladie, but he have
A lusty woman him to save,
And though he wolde give inough
Of his tresor, wherof he drough
Great covetise into his minde
And set his honour fer behinde.

Thus he, whom gold hath oversette,
Was trapped in his owne nette.
The gold hath made his wittes lame,
So that sechend his owne shame
He rouneth in the kinges ere
And said him, that he wiste where
A gentil and a lusty one
Tho was, and thider wold he gone,
But he mote yive yestes great,
For but it be through great beyete
Of gold, he said, he shuld nought spede.
The king him bad upon the nede,
That take an hundred pound he sholde
And yive it, where that he wolde,
Be so it were in worthy place.
And thus to stonde in loves grace
This king his gold hath abandoned.
And whan this tale was full rouned,
The steward toke the gold and went
Within his herte and many a went
Of covetise than he caste,
Wherof a purpos ate laste
Ayein love and ayein his right
He toke and faide, how thilke night
His wife shall ligge by the king.
And goth thenkend upon this thing
Toward his inn till he cam home
Into the chambre and than he nome
His wife and tolde her al the cas.
And she, which red for shame was,

With bothe her hondes hath him praid
Knelend and in this wise said,
That she to reson and to skill
In what thing that he bidde will
Is redy for to done his heste,
But this thing that were nought honeste,
That he for gold her shulde selle.
And he tho with his wordes felle
Forth with his gasty countenaunce
Saith, that she shall done obeisaunce
And folwe his wille in every place.
And thus through strength of his manace
Her innocence is overladde,
Wherof she was so fore adradde,
That she his will mot nede obey.
And therupon was shape a wey,
That he his owne wife by night
Hath out of alle mennes sight
So prively that none it wist
Brought to the king, which as him list
May do with her what he wolde.
For whan she was there as she sholde
With him abedde under the cloth,
The steward toke his leve and goth
Into the chambre faste by.
But how he slept that wot nought I,
For he figh cause of jelousy.

But he, which hath the compaigny
Of such a lusty one as she,
Him thoughte that of his degre

There was no man so wel at ese.
She doth all that she may to plesse,
So that his hert all hole she had
And thus this kinge his joie lad,
Till it was nigh upon the day
The steward thanne where she lay
Cam to the bed and in this wise
Hath bidde she shulde arise.
The king saith : Nay, she shall nought go.
The steward said ayein : Nought so,
For she mot gone er it be knowe,
And so I swore at thilke throwe,
Whan I her fette to you here.
The king his tale wol nought here
And saith, how that he hath her bought,
Forthy she shall departe nought,
Till he the brighte day beholde.
And caught her in her armes folde,
As he which liste for to pley
And bad his steward gone away.
And so he did ayein his will,
And thus his wife abedde still
Lay with the king the longe night,
Till that it was high sonne light.
But who she was he knew nothing.
Tho cam the steward to the king
And praid him that withoute shame
In saving of her gode name
He mighte leaden home ayeine
This lady, and hath told him pleine,

How that it was his owne wife.
The king his ere unto this strife
Hath leid, and whan that he it herde,
Well nigh out of his wit he ferde
And said: Ha, caitif most of alle,
Where was it ever er this befallle,
That any cokard in this wise
Betoke his wife for covetise.
Thou hast bothe her and me beguiled
And eke thin own estate reviled,
Wherof that buxom unto the
Here after shall she never be.
For this avow to god I make
After this day, if I the take,
Thou shalt be honged and to-drawe.
Now loke anone thou be withdrawe,
So that I se the never more.
This steward thanne drad him fore
With all the haste that he may
And fled away the same day
And was exiled out of lond. 1825

Lo, there a nice husbond,
Which thus hath losse his wife for ever.
But netheles she hadde a lever,
The king her weddeth and honoureth,
Wherof her name she foccoureth,
Which erst was lost through covetise
Of him, that lad her other wise
And hath him self also forlore.

My sone, be thou ware therfore,

Confessor.

Where thou shalt love in any place,
 That thou no covetise embrace,
 The which is nought of loves kinde.
 But for all that a man may finde
 Now in this time of thilke rage
 Full great disese in mariage,
 Whan venim medleth with the sucre
 And mariage is made for lucre
 Or for the lust or for the hele,
 What man that shall with other dele,
 He may nought faile to repent.

Amans. My fader, such is min entent.
 But netheles good is to have,
 For good may ofte time save
 The love, which shulde elles spille.
 But god, which wot min hertes wille,
 I dar wel take to witnesse,
 Yet was I never for richeffe
 Befet with mariage none,
 For all min herte is upon one
 So frely, that in the persone
 Stant all my worldes joy alone.
 I axe nouthen park ne plough,
 If I her hadde, it were inough,
 Her love shulde me suffice
 Withouten other covetise.
 Lo now, my fader, as of this
 Touchend of me right as it is
 My shrifte I am beknowe plein,
 And if ye wol ought elles fain

Of covetise if there be more
In love, agropeth out the fore.

*Fallere cum nequeat, propria vir fraude subornat
Testes, sitque eis vera retorta fides.
Sicut agros cupidus dum querit amans mulieres,
Vult testes falsos falsus habere suos.
Non sine vindicta perjurus abibit in eis,
Visu qui cordis intima cuncta videt.
Fallere perjuro non est laudanda puellam
Gloria, sed false condicionis opus.*

4.

My sone, thou shalt understonde,
How covetise hath yet on honde
In speciall two counseilors,
That ben also his procurors.
The first of hem is fals witnesse,
Which ever is redy to witnesse
What thing his maister woll him hote.
Perjurie is the second hote,
Which spareth nought to swere an othe,
Though it be fals and god be wrothe,
That one shall fals witnesse bere,
That other shall the thing forswere,
Whan he is charged on the boke.
So what with hepe, and what with croke
They make her maister ofte winne
And woll nought knowe, what is finne
For covetise, and thus men fain,
They maken many a fals bargein.
There may no trewe quarel arise
In thilke queste of thilke assise,
Where as they two the people enforme.
For they kepe ever o maner forme,

Hic tractat super
illis avaricie specie-
bus, que falsum
testimonium et per-
jurium nuncupan-
tur, quorum frau-
dulenta circum-
vencio tam in cupi-
ditatis quam in a-
moris causa sui de-
siderii propositum
quam sepe fallaci-
ter attingit.

That upon golde her conscience
 They founde and take her evidence.
 And thus with fals witnesse and othes
 They winne hem mete, drink and clothes.
 Right so there be, who that hem knewe,
 Of these lovers ful many untrewē.
 Now may a woman finde inow,
 That eche of hem, whan he shall wowe,
 Anone he woll his hand down lain
 Upon a boke and fwere and fain,
 That he woll feith and trouthe bere.
 And thus he profreth him to fwere
 To serven ever till he deie,
 And all is verray trechery.
 For whan the soth him selven trieth,
 The more he swereth, the more he lieth,
 Whan he his feith maketh allthermest,
 Than may a woman trust him lest,
 For till he may his will acheve,
 He is no lenger for to leve.
 Thus is the trouth of love exiled,
 And many a good woman beguiled.

Confessor. And eke to speke of fals witnesse
 There be now many such I gesse,
 That lich unto the provisours
 They make her prive procurors
 To tell how there is such a man,
 Which is worthy to love and can
 All that a good man shulde conne,
 So that with lesing is begonne

The cause, in which they woll procede.
And also fiker as the crede
They make of that they knowen fals,
And thus full oft about the hals
Love is of false men embraced.
But love, which is so purchaced,
Cometh afterward to litel prise.
Forthy, my sone, if thou be wise,
Now thou hast herd this evidence,
Thou might thin owne conscience
Oppose, if thou hast be such one.

Amans.

Nay god wot, fader, I am none
Ne never was, for as men faith,
Whan that a man shall make his feith,
His hert and tunge must accorde.
For if so be that they discorde,
Than is he fals and elles nought,
And I dare say, as of my thought
In love it is nought discordable
Unto my word, but accordable.
And in this wise, fader, I
May right well swere and fausly,
That I my lady love well,
For that accordeth every dele,
It nedeth nought to my soth sawe,
That I witnesse shulde drawe
Into this day, for ever yit
Ne might it sinke into my wit,
That I my counseil shulde say
To any wight or me bewrey

To sechen helpe in such manere,
 But onely for my lady dere.
 And though a thousand men it wiste,
 That I her love, and than hem liste
 With me to fwere and to witnesse,
 Yet were that no fals witnesse.
 For I dare unto this trouth dwelle,
 I love her more, than I can telle.
 Thus am I, fader, gilteles,
 As ye have herde, and netheles
 In your dome I put it all.

Confessor. My sone, wite in speciall
 It shall nought comunliche faile,
 All though it for a time availe,
 That fals witnesse his cause spede
 Upon the point of his falskede,
 It shall well afterward be kid,
 Wherof so as it is betid
 Ensamle of such thinges blinde
 In a cronique write I finde.

Hic ponit exemplum
 de illis, qui falsum
 testificantes, amoris
 innocenciam circum-
 veniunt, et narrat,
 qualiter Thetis A-
 chillem filium suum
 adulescentem mulie-
 bri vestitum apparatu
 asserens esse puellam
 inter regis Lichome-
 dis filias ad educan-
 dum produxit, et sic
 Achilles decepto rege
 filie sue Deidamie so-
 cia et cubicularia ef-
 fectus super ipsam

The goddesse of the see Thetis,
 She had a sone, and his name is
 Achilles, whom to kepe and warde,
 While he was yonge, and into warde
 She thought him saufly to betake
 As she, which dradde for his sake
 Of that was said of prophecie,
 That he at Troie sholde deie,
 Whan that the citee was belein.
 Forthy so as the bokes sain,

She cast her wit in sondry wise,
How she him mighte so desguise,
That no man shuld his body knowe.
And so befell that ilke throwe,
While that she thought upon this dede,
There was a king, which Lichomede
Was hote, and he was well begone
With faire doughters many one
And dwelte fer out in an ile.
Now shalt thou here a wonder wile.
This quene, which the mother was
Of Achilles, upon this cas
Her sone, as he a maiden were,
Let clothen in the same gere,
Which longeth unto womanhede.
And he was yonge and toke none hede,
But suffreth all that she him dede,
Wherof she hath her women bede
And chargeth by her othes alle,
How so it afterward befalle,
That they discover nought this thing,
But feigne and make a knouleching
Upon the counseil, which was nome,
In every place where they come
To telle and to witnesse this,
Howe he her ladies doughter is.
And right in such a maner wise
She bad they shuld her don servise,
So that Achilles underfongeth
As to a yong lady belongeth

Pirrum genuit, qui
postea mire probita-
tis miliciam affecutus
mortem patris sui a-
pud Trojam in Po-
lixenem tyrannice vin-
dicavit.

Honour, service and reverence.
 For Thetis with great diligence
 Him hath so taught and so affaited,
 That how so that he were awaited
 With sobre and goodly contenance
 He shuld his womanhede avaunce,
 That none the sothe knowe might,
 But that in every mannes fight
 He shulde seme a pure maide.
 And in such wise, as she him said,
 Achilles, which that ilke while
 Was yonge, upon him selfe to smile
 Began, whan he was so besein.
 And thus after the bokes fain
 With frette of perle upon his hede
 All freshe betwene the white and red
 As he, which tho was tender of age,
 Stood the colour in his visage,
 That for to loke upon his cheke
 And seen his childly maner eke
 He was a woman to beholde.
 And than his moder to him tolde,
 That she him hadde so begone
 By cause that she thoughte gone
 To Lichomede at thilke tide,
 Where that she said, he shulde abide
 Amonge his doughters for to dwelle.
 Achilles herd his moder telle
 And wiste nought the cause why.
 And netheles full buxomly

He was redy to that she bad,
Wherof his moder was right glad.
To Lichomede and forth they went,
And whan the king knewe her entent
And sigh this yonge doughter there,
And that it came unto his ere
Of such record, of such witnesse,
He hadde right a great gladnesse
Of that he bothe sigh and herde
As he, that wot nought how it ferde
Upon the counseil of the nede.
But for all that king Lichomede
Hath toward him his doughter take
And for Thetis his moder sake,
He put her into compaigny
To dwelle with Deidamy,
His owne doughter the eldest,
The fairest and the comliest
Of al his doughters, which he had.
Lo, thus Thetis the cause lad
And lefte there Achilles feigned,
As he, which hath him self restreigned
In all that ever he may and can
Out of the maner of a man
And toke his womanishe chere,
Wherof unto his bedfere
Deidamy he hath by night,
Where kinde will him selve right
After the philosophres sain,
There may no wight be there ayein.

And that was thilke time sene,
 The longe nightes hem betwene
 Nature, which may nought forbere,
 Hath made hem bothe for to stere,
 They kissen first and overmore
 The highe wey of loves lore
 They gone, and all was done in dede,
 Wherof lost is the maidenhede.
 And that was afterward well knowe.
 For it befell that ilke throwe
 At Troie, where the siege lay
 Upon the cause of Menelay
 And of his quene dame Heleine,
 The Gregois hadden mochel peine
 All day to fight and to assaile.
 But for they mighten nought availe
 So noble a citee for to winne
 A prive counseil they beginne
 In sondry wise where they treat
 And ate last among the great
 They fellen unto his accorde,
 That Protheus of his recorde,
 Which was an astronomien
 And eke a great magicien,
 Shulde of his calculation
 Seche of constellation,
 How they the citee mighten gette.
 And he, which hadde nought foryete
 Of that belongeth to a clerke,
 His study set upon this werke,

So longe his wit about he caste,
Till that he founde out at laste,
But if they hadden Achilles
Her werre shall ben endeles.
And over that he tolde hem pleine,
In what maner he was beseine
And in what place he shall be founde,
So that within a litel stounde
Ulixes forth with Diomedes
Upon this point to Lichomede
Agamenon to-gider sente.
But Ulixes, er he forth wente,
Which was one of the most wise
Ordeined hath in such a wise,
That he the most riche array,
Wherof a woman may be gay,
With him he toke manifolde
And overmore, as it is tolde,
An harneis for a lusty knight,
Which burned was as silver bright,
Of swerde, of plate and eke of maile,
As though he shulde do bataile,
He toke also with him by ship.
And thus to-gider in felaship
Forth gone this Diomedes and he
In hope till they mighten see
The place, where Achilles is.
The wind stood thanne nought amis,
But every topsailecole it blew,
Till Ulixes the marches knewe,

Where Lichomede his regne had.
 The stiresman so well him lad,
 That they ben comen sauf to londe,
 Where they gone out upon the stronde
 Into the burgh, where that they founde
 The king, and he which hath facounde
 Ulixes dide the message.

But the counseile of his corage,
 Why that he came, he tolde nought,
 But underneth he was bethought,
 In what maner he might aspice
 Achilles fro Deidamy
 And fro these other, that there were,
 Full many a lusty lady there.

They plaide hem there a day or two,
 And as it was fortunéd so,
 It fell that time in fuche a wise
 To Bachus that a sacrifice
 These yonge ladies shulden make.
 And for the straunge mennes sake,
 That comen fro the siege of Troy,
 They maden well the more joy.
 There was revell, there was dauncing,
 And every life, which couthe sing
 Of lusty women in the route
 A freshe caroll hath song aboute.
 But for all this yet netheles
 The Grekes unknowe of Achilles
 So weren, that in no degre
 They couthen wite, which was he

Ne by his vois, ne by his pas.
Ulixes than upon the cas
A thing of high prudence hath wrought.
For thilk array, which he hath brought,
To yive among the women there
He let do fetten all the gere
Forth with a knightes harneis eke.
In all the contre for to seke
Men sholden nought a fairer se.
And every thing in his degre
Endelong upon a bourde he laide.
To Lichomede and than he preide,
That every lady chese sholde
What thing of alle that she wolde
And take it as by way of yift,
For they hem self it shulde shift
He saide after her owne wille.
Achilles thanne stood nought stille,
Whan he the brighte helm behelde,
The sward, the hauberk and the shelde,
His herte fell therto anone,
Of all that other wold he none,
The knightes gere he underfongeth
And thilke array, which that belongeth
Unto the women he forsoke.
And in this wise, as saith the boke,
They knowen thanne whiche he was,
For he goth forth the grete pas
Into the chambre, where he lay,
Anone and made no delay,

He armeth him in knightly wife,
 That better can no man devise.
 And as fortune shulde falle,
 He came so forth to-fore hem alle
 As he, which tho was glad inough.
 But Lichomede nothing lough,
 Whan that he figh, how that it ferde.
 For than he wiste well and herde,
 His doughter hadde be forlain.
 But that he was so oversein,
 The wonder overgoth his wit.
 For in cronique is write yit
 Thing, which shall never be foryete,
 How that Achilles hath begete
 Pirrus upon Deidamy,
 Wherof came out the trechery
 Of fals witnesse when he saide,
 How that Achilles was a maide.
 But that was nothing sene tho,
 For he is to the siege go
 Forth with Ulixes and Diomede.

Confessor. Lo, thus was proved in the dede
 And fully spoke at thilke while,
 If o woman an other beguile,
 Where is there any fikerneffe,
 Whan Thetis which was than the goddesse
 Deidamy hath so bejaped,
 I not how it shall bene escaped
 With tho women, whose innocence
 Is now al day through such credence

Deceived ofte, as it is sene
With men, that such untrouthe mene.
For they ben sligh in suche a wise,
That they by sleight and by queintise
Of fals witnesse bringen inne
That doth hem ofte for to winne,
Where they ben nought worthy therto.
Forthy, my sone, do nought so.

My fader, as of fals witnesse Amans.
The trouth and the matere expresse
Touchend of love, howe it hath ferde,
As ye have tolde, I have well herde.
But for ye saiden other wise,
How thilke vice of covetise
Hath yet perjurie of his accorde,
If that you list of some recorde
To tellen an other tale also
In loves cause of time ago,
What thing it is to be forswore,
I wolde preie you therfore,
Wherof I might ensample take.

My gode sone, and for thy sake 3277 Confessor.
Touchend of this I shall fulfill
Thin axing at thin owne will
And the matere I shall declare,
How the women deceived are,
Whan they so tendre hertes bere,
Of that they heren men so swere.
But whan it cometh unto thassay,
They finde it fals another day,

As Jafon did unto Medee,
Which ftant yet of auctorite
In token and in memoriall,
Wherof the tale in speciall
Is in the boke of Troie write,
Which I fhall do the for to wite.

Hic in amoris caufa
ponit exemplum con-
tra perjuros et narrat,
qualiter Jafon, priuf-
quam ad infulam
Colchos pro aureo
vellere ibidem con-
queftando transmea-
ret, in amorem et
conjugium Medee re-
gis Othonis filie ju-
ramento firmius se
afrinxit, fed fuo poft-
tea completo negocio
cum ipfam fecum na-
vigio in Greciam per-
duxiffet, ubi illa fe-
nectam patris fui E-
fonis in floridam ju-
ventutem mirabili
fciencia reformavit,
ipfe Jafon fidei fue
ligamento aliisque
beneficiis poftpofitis,
dictam Medeam pro
quadam Creufa regis
Creontis filia perju-
rus dereliquit.

In Grece whilom was a king,
Of whom the fame and knouleching
Beleveth yet, and Peleus
He highte, but it fell him thus,
That his fortune her whele fo lad,
That he no childe his owne had
To regnen after his decefs.
He had a brother netheles,
Whofe righte name was Efon,
And he the worthy knight Jafon
Begat, the which in every londe
All other paffed of his honde
In armes, fo that he the beft
Was named and the worthieft.
He foughte worshop over all.
Now herken, and I telle fhall
An adventure that he fought,
Which afterward full dere he bought.

There was an ile, which Colchos
Was cleped, and therof aros
Great fpeche in every londe aboute,
That fuch merveile was none oute
In all the wide world no where,
As tho was in that ile there.

There was a shepe, as it was tolde,
The which his flees bare all of golde,
And so the goddes had it sette,
That it ne might away be fette
By power of no worldes wight.
And yet full many a worthy knight
It had assaied, as they dorste,
And ever it fell hem to the worste.
But he that wolde it nought forsake,
But of his knighthode undertake
To do, what thing therto belongeth,
This worthy Jafon sore alongeth
To se the straunge regions
And knowe the conditions
Of other marches, where he went.
And for that cause his hole entent
He sette Colchos for to seche
And therupon he made a speche
To Peleus his eme the king.
And he wel paid was of that thing
And shope anone for his passage
And such as were of his lignage
With other knightes, whiche he chees,
With him he toke, and Hercules,
Which full was of chivalerie,
With Jafon went in compaignie,
And that was in the month of may,
Whan colde stormes were away,
The wind was good, the ship was yare,
They toke her leve, and forth they fare

Toward Colchos. But on the way
 What hem befelle is long to say,
 How Lamedon the king of Troy,
 Which ought well have made hem joy,
 Whan they to rest a while him preide,
 Out of his lond he them congeide.
 And so fell the diffention,
 Whiche after was destruction
 Of that citee, as men may here.
 But that is nought to my matere,
 But thus the worthy folke Gregois
 Fro that king, which was nought curtois,
 And fro his londe with sail updrawe
 They went hem forth and many a sawe
 They made and many a great manace,
 Till ate last into that place,
 Which as they foughte, they arrive
 And striken sail and forth as blive
 They sent unto the king and tolden,
 Who weren there and what they wolden.

Oetes, which was thanne king,
 Whan that he herde this tiding
 Of Jafon, which was comen there,
 And of these other, what they were,
 He thoughte done hem great worship.
 For they anone come out of ship
 And straught unto the king they wente
 And by the honde Jafon he hente,
 And that was at the paleis gate,
 So fer the king came on his gate

Toward Jafon to done him chere.
And he, whom lacketh no manere,
Whan he the king figh in presence,
Yaf him ayein such reverence
As to a kinges state belongeth.
And thus the king him underfongeth
And Jafon in his arme he caught
And forth into the hall he straught,
And there they sit and speke of thinges.
And Jafon tolde him tho tidinges,
Why he was come, and faire him preide
To hafte his time, and the kinge faide :
 Jafon, thou art a worthy knight,
But it lieth in no mannes might
To done, that thou art come fore.
There hath bene many a knight forlore
Of that they wolden it affaie.
But Jafon wolde him nought esmaie
And faide : Of every worldes cure
Fortune stant in aventure
Paraunter well, paraunter wo.
But how as ever that it go,
It shall be with min honde affaied.
The king tho helde him nought wel paied
For he the Grekes fore dredde,
In aunter if Jafon ne spedde,
He mighte therof bere a blame,
For tho was all the worldes fame
In Grece, as for to speke of armes.
Forthy he drad him of his harmes

And gan to preche and to prey.
 But Jafon wolde nought obey,
 But said, he wolde his purpos holde
 For ought that any man him tolde.
 The king whan he these wordes herde
 And figh how that this knight answerde,
 Yet for he wolde make him glad,
 After Medea gone he bad,
 Which was his doughter, and she cam
 And Jafon, which good hede nam,
 Whan he her figh, ayein her goth.
 And she, which was him nothing loth,
 Welcomed him into that londe
 And softe toke him by the honde
 And down they setten bothe same.
 She had herd spoken of his name
 And of his grete worthinesse,
 Forthy she gan her eye impresse
 Upon his face and his stature
 And thought, how never creature
 Was so welfarend, as was he.
 And Jafon right in such degre
 Ne mighte nought witholde his loke,
 But so good hede on her he toke,
 That him ne thought under the heven
 Of beaute figh he never her even
 With all that felle to womanhede.
 Thus eche of other token hede,
 Though there no word was of recorde,
 Her hertes both of one accorde

Ben sette to love, but as tho
There mighten ben no wordes mo.
The king made him great joy and fest,
To all his men he gaf an hest,
So as they wolde his thank deserve,
That they shulde alle Jason serve,
While that he wolde there dwelle.
And thus the day, shortly to telle,
With many merthes they dispent,
Till night was come, and tho they went,
Echone of other toke his leve,
Whan they no lenger mighten leve.
I not how Jason that night slepe,
But well I wot, that of the shepe,
For which he cam into that ile,
He thoughte but a litel while,
All was Medea that he thought,
So that in many wise he fought
His wit wakend, er it was day,
Some time ye, some time nay,
Some time thus, some time so,
As he was stered to and fro
Of love and eke of his conquest,
As he was holde of his behest.
And thus he rose up by the morwe
And toke him self seint John to borwe
And faide, he wolde first beginne
At love, and after for to winne
The flees of gold, for which he come,
And thus to him good herte he nome.

Medea right the same wife
 Till day cam, that she must arise,
 Lay and bethought her all the night,
 How she that noble worthy knight
 By any waie mighte wedde.
 And wel she wist, if he ne spedde
 Of thing, which he had undertake,
 She might her self no purpose take.
 For if he deiede of his bataile,
 She muste than algate faile
 To geten him, whan he were dede.
 Thus she began to sette rede
 And torne about her wittes all
 To loke how that it mighte fall,
 That she with him had a leiser
 To speke and telle of her desir.
 And so it fell the same day
 That Jafon with that swete may
 To-gider set and hadden space
 To speke, and he besought her grace.
 And she his tale goodly herde
 And afterward she him answerde
 And saide: Jafon, as thou wilt
 Thou might be sauf, thou might be spilt,
 For wite well, that never man,
 But if he couthe that I can,
 Ne mighte that fortune acheve,
 For which thou comest. But as I leve,
 If thou wolt holde covenaut
 To love of all the remenaunt,

I shall thy life and honour save,
That thou the flees of gold shalt have.
He said : Al at your owne wille,
Madame, I shall truly fulfille
Your heste, while my life may last.
Thus longe he praid and ate last
She graunteth and behight him this,
That whan night cometh and it time is,
She wolde him sende certainly
Such one, that shulde him prively
Alone into her chambre bringe.
He thonketh her of that tidinge,
For of that grace is him begonne,
Him thenketh al other thinges wonne.

The day made ende and lost his fight
And comen was the derke night,
The whiche all the daies eye blent.

Jason toke leve and forth he went,
And whan he cam out of the prees,
He toke to counseil Hercules
And tolde him, how it was betid,
And praide it shulde well ben hid,
And that he wolde loke about
The whiles that he shall be out.
Thus as he stood and hede name,
A maiden fro Medea came
And to her chambre Jason ledde,
Where that he found redy to bedde
The fairest and the wisest eke.
And she with simple chere and meke,

Whan she him sigh, wax all ashamed.
Tho was her tale newe entamed
For fikerneffe of mariage,
She fette forth a riche ymage,
Which was the figure of Jupiter,
And Jason swore and saide there,
That also wis god shuld him helpe,
That if Medea did him helpe,
That he his purpose mighte winne,
They shulde never part atwinne,
But ever while him lasteth life,
He wolde her holde for his wife.
And with that word they kisten both.
And for they shulde hem uncloth
There come a maid and in her wise
She did hem bothe full servise,
Till that they were in bedde naked,
I wot that night was well bewaked.
They hadden bothe what they wolde.
And than at leiser she him tolde
And gan fro point to point enforme
Of this bataile and all the forme,
Whiche as he shulde finde there,
Whan he to thile come were.
She saide, at entre of the pas
How Mars, which god of armes was,
Hath set two oxen sterne and stoute,
That casten fire and flame aboute
Both ate mouth and at the nase,
So that they setten all on blase

What thing that passeth hem betwene.
And furthermore upon the grene
There goth the flees of gold to kepe
A serpent, which may never slepe.
Thus who that ever it shulde winne,
The fire to stoppe he mot beginne
Which that the fierce bestes caste,
And daunt he mot hem ate laste,
So that he may hem yoke and drive,
And there upon he mot as blive
The serpent with such strength assaile,
That he may flee him by bataile
Of which he mot the teeth outdrawe,
As it belongeth to that lawe.
And than he must the oxen yoke,
Til they have with a plough to-broke
A furgh of lond, in which a row
The teeth of thadder he must sow.
And therof shull arise knightes
Well armed at alle rightes,
Of hem is nought to taken hede,
For eche of hem in hastihede
Shall other flee with dethes wounde.
And thus whan they ben laid to grounde
Than mot he to the goddes pray
And go so forth and take his pray.
But if he faile in any wise
Of that ye here me devise,
There may be set non other wey,
That he ne must algates deie.

Now have I told the peril all,
 I woll you tellen forth withall,
 Quod Medea to Jafon tho,
 That ye shull knowen er ye go
 Ayein the venim and the fire,
 What shall be the recoverir.
 But, fire, for it is nigh day,
 Ariseth up, so that I may
 Deliver you what thing I have,
 That may your life and honour save.
 They weren bothe loth to rise,
 But for they weren bothe wise
 Up they arisen ate last.
 Jafon his clothes on him cast
 And made him redy right anon,
 And she her sherte did upon
 And cast on her a mantel close
 Withoute more, and than arose.
 Tho toke she forth a riche tie
 Made all of gold and of perrie,
 Out of the which she nam a ring,
 The stone was worth all other thing.
 She saide, while he wold it were,
 There mighte no peril him dere,
 In water may it nought be dreint,
 Where as it cometh the fire is queint,
 It daunteth eke the cruel heste,
 There may none quad that man areste,
 Where so he be on see or londe,
 That hath this ring upon his honde.

And over that she gan to fain,
That if a man will ben unsein,
Within his hond hold close the stone
And he may invifible gone.
The ring to Jafon she betaught
And fo forth after she him taught,
What facrifice he fhulde make.
And gan out of her cofre take
Him thought an heavenly figure,
Which all by charme and by conjure
Was wrought, and eke it was through-writ
With names, which he fhulde wite,
As she him taughte tho to rede
And bad him as he wolde fpede
Withoute reft of any while,
Whan he were loded in that ile,
He fhulde make his facrifice
And rede his careft in the wife,
As she him taught on knees down bent
Thre fithes toward orient.
For fo fhuld he the goddes plefe
And win him felven mochel efe.
And whan he had it thries radde
To open a buift she him badde,
That she there toke him in prefent,
And was full of fuch oignement,
That there was fire ne venim none,
That fhulde faftne him upon,
Whan that he were anoint withall.
Forthy she taught him how he fhall

Anoint his armes all aboute,
 And for he shulde nothing doubte
 She toke him than a maner glue,
 The which was of so great vertue,
 That where a man it shulde cast
 It shulde binde anon so fast,
 That no man might it done away.
 And that she bad by alle way
 He shulde into the mouthes throw
 Of tho twein oxen that fire blow,
 Therof to stoppen the malice
 The glue shall serve of that office.
 And over that her oignement
 Her ring and her enchaument
 Ayein the serpent shulde him were,
 Till he him flee with swerd or spere.
 And than he may fauflly inough
 His oxen yoke into the plough
 And the teeth sowe in such a wise,
 Till he the knightes se arise
 And eche of other down be laide,
 In suche a maner as I have saide.

Lo, thus Medea for Jafon
 Ordeineth and praieth therupon,
 That he nothing foryete sholde,
 And eke she praieth him that he wolde,
 Whan he hath all his armes done,
 To grounde knele and thonke anone
 The goddes, and so forth by ese
 The flees of golde he shulde sese.

And whan he had it fefed fo,
That than he were fone ago
Withouten any tarieng.
Whan this was faid into weping
She fel, as ſhe that was through-nome
With love, and ſo fer overcome,
That all her worlde on him ſhe fette.
But whan ſhe figh there was no lette,
That he mot nedes part her fro,
She toke him in her armes two
An hunderd times and gan him kiſſe
And faid : O, all my worldes bliſſe,
My truſt, my luſt, my life, min hele,
To ben thin helpe in this quarele
I pray unto the goddes alle.
And with that word ſhe gan down falle
Of ſwoune, and he her uppe nam,
And forth with that the maiden cam,
And they to bed anone her brought,
And thanne Jaſon her beſought
And to her faide in this manere :
My worthy luſty lady dere,
Comforteth you, for by my trouth
It ſhall nought fallen in my ſlouth,
That I ne woll throughout fulfille
Your heſtes at your owne wille.
And yet I hope to you bringe
Within a while ſuch tidinge,
The which ſhall make us bothe game.
But for he wolde kepe her name,

Whan that he wist it was nigh day,
 He saide : Adewe my swete may.
 And forth with him he nam his gere,
 Which as she hadde take him there,
 And straught unto his chambre went
 And goth to bedde and slepe him hent
 And lay, that no man him awoke,
 For Hercules hede of him toke,
 Till it was underne high and more.
 And than he gan to fighe fore
 And sodeinlich he braide of slepe,
 And they than token of him kepe,
 His chamberleins ben sone there
 And maden redy all his gere,
 And he arose and to the king
 He went and said, how to that thing,
 For which he cam, he wolde go.
 The king therof was wonder wo
 And for he wolde him fain withdraw,
 He told him many a dredefull sawe.
 But Jafon wolde it nought recorde
 And ate laste they accorde,
 Whan that he wolde nought abide,
 A bote was redy ate tide,
 In which this worthy knight of Grece
 Full armed up at every piece
 To his bataile which belongeth
 Toke ore in hond and fore him longeth,
 Till he the water passed were.

Whan he cam to that ile there,

He fet him on his knees down straught
And his carecte, as he was taught,
He rad and made his sacrifice
And sith anoint him in that wise,
As Medea him hadde bede,
And than arose up fro that stede
And with the glue the fire he queint
And anone after he atteint
The grete serpent and him slough.
But erst he hadde sorwe inough,
For that serpent made him travaile
So hard and fore of his bataile,
That now he stood and now he fell,
For longe time it so befell,
That with his swerd and with his spere
He mighte nought that serpent dere,
He was so sherded all aboute
It held all egge tole withoute,
He was so rude and hard of skin,
There might no thinge go therein.
Venim and fire to-gider he cast,
That he Jafon so fore ablafte,
That if ne were his oignement,
His ring and his enchauntement,
Which Medea toke him before,
He hadde with that worm be lore.
But of vertu, which therof cam,
Jafon the dragon overcam
And he anone the teeth out drough
And fet his oxen in his plough,

With which he brake a piece of lond
 And sewe hem with his owne hond.
 Tho might he great merveile se,
 Of every toth in his degre
 Sprong up a knight with spere and sheld,
 Of which anone right in the feld
 Echone slough other, and with that
 Jafon Medea not foryat,
 On both his knees he gan down falle
 And yaf thank to the goddes alle.
 The flees he toke and goth to bote,
 The sonne shineth bright and hote,
 The flees of gold shone forth with all,
 The water gliftred over all.
 Medea wept and fighed ofte
 And stood upon a toure alofte
 All prively within her felve,
 There herd it nouthen ten ne twelve.
 She praid and said : O, god him spede,
 The knight, which hath my maidenhede.
 And ay she loketh toward thile,
 But whan she sigh within a while
 The flees gliftrend ayein the sonne,
 She said : Ha lord, now all is wonne,
 My knight the feld hath overcome,
 Now wolde god, he were come.
 Ha lord, I wold he were a londe.
 But I dare take this on honde,
 If that she hadde winges two,
 She wold have flowe unto him tho

Straught there he was unto the bote.
The day was clere, the sonne hote,
The Gregois weren in great doubt
The while that her lord was out,
They wisten nought what shuld betide,
But waited ever upon the tide
To se what ende shulde falle.
There stoden eke the nobles alle
Forth with the comunes of the town,
And as they loken up and down,
They weren ware within a throwe,
Where cam the bote, which they wel knowe,
And sigh, how Jafon brought his prey.
And tho they gonnen alle say
And criden alle with o steven :
Ha, where was ever under the heven
So noble a knight, as Jafon is ?
And wel nigh alle faiden this,
That Jafon was a faire knight,
For it was never of mannes might
The flees of gold so for to winne,
And thus tellen they beginne.
With that the king cam forth anone
And sigh the flees, how that it shone.
And whan Jafon cam to the londe,
The kinge him selve toke his honde
And kist him, and great joy him made.
The Gregois weren wonder glade
And of that thing right merry hem thought
And forth with hem the flees they brought,

And eche on other gan to ligh.
But wel was him that mighte nigh
To se there of the proprete,
And thus they passen the citee
And gone unto the paleis straught.

Medea, which foryat her nought,
Was redy there and said anon :
Welcome, O worthy knight Jason.
She wolde have kist him wonder fain,
But shame torned her ayein,
It was nought the maner as tho.
Forthy she dorste nought do so
She toke her leve, and Jason went
Into his chambre and she him sent
Her maiden to sene how he ferde.
The which whan that he sigh and herde,
How that he hadde faren out
And that it stood well all about,
She tolde her lady what she wist,
And she for joy her maiden kist.
The bathes weren than araied
With herbes tempred and assaied
And Jason was unarmed sone
And dide, as it befell to done,
Into his bathe he went anone
And wishe him clene as any bone,
He toke a soppe and out he cam
And on his best array he nam
And kempt his hede, whan he was clad,
And goth him forth all merry and glad

Right straught into the kinges halle.
The king cam with his knightes alle
And maden him glad welcoming.
And he hem tolde tho tiding
Of this and that, how it befell,
Whan that he wan the shepes fell.
Medea whan she was asent
Come sone to that parlement,
And whan she mighte Jafon se,
Was none so glad of all as she.
There was no joie for to seche,
Of him made every man a speche,
Some man said one, some said other,
But though he were goddes brother
And mighte make fire and thonder,
There mighte be no more wonder
Than was of him in that citee.
Echone taught other this is he,
Whiche hath in his power withinne,
That all the world ne mighte winne,
Lo, here the best of alle good.
Thus saiden they, that there stood
And eke that walked up and down
Both of the court and of the town.

The time of souper cam anon,
They wisshen and therto they gon,
Medea was with Jafon set,
Tho was there many a deinte fet
And set to-fore hem on the bord,
But none so liking as the word,

Which was there spoke among hem two,
So as they dorste speke tho.
But though they hadden litel space,
Yet they accorden in that place,
How Jafon shulde come at night,
Whan every torche and every light
Were out, and than of other thinges
They speke aloud for supposinges
Of hem that stoden there aboute,
For love is evermore in doubte,
If that it be willy governed
Of hem that ben of love lerned.
Whan al was done, that dish and cup
And cloth and bord and all was up,
They waken, while hem list to wake,
And after that they leve take
And gon to bedde for to reste.
And whan him thoughte for the beste,
That every man was fast a slepe,
Jafon, that wolde his time kepe,
Goth forth stalkend all prively
Unto the chambre and redely
There was a maide, which him kept,
Medea woke and no thing slept,
But nethes she was a bedde,
And he with alle haste him spedde
And made him naked and all warm.
Anone he toke her in his arm,
What nede is for to speke of ese,
Hem list eche other for to plese,

So that they hadden joy inow.
 And tho they setten, whan and how,
 That she with him away shal stele,
 With wordes such and other fele.
 Whan all was treted to an ende,
 Jafon toke leve and gan forth wende
 Unto his owne chambre in pees.
 There wist it non but Hercules.

He slept and ros, whan it was time,
 And whan it fel towards prime,
 He toke to him such as he triste
 In secre, that none other wiste,
 And told hem of his counseil there
 And faide, that his wille were,
 That they to ship had alle thing
 So privelich in thevening,
 That no man might her dede aspie
 But tho that were of compaignie,
 For he woll go withoute leve
 And lenger woll he nought beleve,
 But he ne wolde at thilke throwe
 The king or quene shulde it knowe.
 They said, all this shall well be do.
 And Jafon truste well therto.

Medea in the mene while,
 Which thought her fader to beguile,
 The tresor, which her fader hadde,
 With her all prively she ladde
 And with Jafon at time set
 Away she stole and found no let

And straught she goth her into ship
Of Grece with that felaship.
And they anone drough up the saile,
And all that night this was counseil,
But erly whan the sonne shone,
Men figh, how that they were gone
And come unto the kinge and tolde.
And he the sothe knowe wolde
And axeth, where his doughter was.
There was no word, but out alas,
She was ago, the moder wept,
The fader as a wodeman lept
And gan the time for to warie
And swore his othe he wold nought tarie,
That with caliphe and with galey
The same cours, the same wey,
Which Jafon toke, he wolde take,
If that he might him overtake.
To this they saiden alle ye.
Anone as they were ate see
And all as who faith at one worde,
They gone withinne shippes borde,
The sail goth up, and forth they straught,
But none esploit therof they caught,
And so they tornen home ayein,
For all that labour was in vein.
Jafon to Grece with his pray
Goth through the see the righte way.
Whan he there come and men it tolde,
They maden joie yong and olde.

Eson whan that he wist of this,
 How that his sone comen is
 And hath acheved that he sought
 And home with him Medea brought,
 In all the wide world was none
 So glad a man as he was one.
 To-gider ben these lovers tho,
 Till that they hadden sones two,
 Wherof they weren bothe glade
 And olde Eson great joie made
 To seen thencrees of his lignage,
 For he was of so great an age,
 That men awaiten every day,
 Whan that he shulde gone away.
 Jason, which figh his fader olde,
 Upon Medea made him bolde
 Of art magique, which she couth,
 And praieth her, that his faders youth
 She wolde make ayeinward newe.
 And she that was toward him trewe,
 Behight him, that she wolde it do,
 Whan that she time figh therto.
 But what she did in that matere
 It is a wonder thing to here,
 But yet for the novelrie
 I thenke tellen a great partie.

Thus it befell upon a night,
 Whan there was nought but sterre light,
 She was vanished right as her list,
 That no wight but her self it wist.

Nota, quibus medi-
 camentis Esonem
 senectute decrepi-
 tum ad sue juven-
 tutis adolefcentiam
 prudens Medea re-
 duxit.

And that was ate midnight tide,
The world was still on every side,
With open hede and foot all bare
Her hair to-sprad she gan to fare,
Upon her clothes gert she was
All specheles and on the gras
She glode forth as an adder doth.
None other wise she ne goth,
Till she came to the freshe flood,
And there a while she withstood,
Thries she torned her aboute
And thries eke she gan down loute
And in the flood she wethe her hair,
And thries on the water there
She gaspeth with a drecchinge onde
And tho she toke her speche on honde.
First she began to clepe and calle
Upwarde unto the sterres alle,
To winde, to air, to see, to londe
She preide and eke helde up her honde
To Echates and gan to crie,
Whiche is goddesse of forcerie,
She saide: Helpeth at this nede,
And as ye maden me to spede,
Whan Jafon came the flees to seche,
So help me now, I you besече.
With that she loketh and was ware,
Down fro the fky there came a chare,
The which dragons aboute drowe.
And tho she gan her hede down bowe

And up she stighe and faire and well
She drove forth by chare and wheel
Above in thaire among the skies,
The londe of Crete in tho parties
She fought, and faste gan her hie,
And therupon the hulles high
Of Othrin and Olimpe also
And eke of other hulles mo
She founde and gadreth herbes suote,
She pulleth up some by the rote
And many with a knife she shereth
And all into her char she bereth.
Thus whan she hath the hulles fought,
The floodes there foryate she nought
Eridian and Amphrifos,
Peneie and eke Spercheidos,
To hem she went and there she nome
Both of the water and of the fome,
The sonde and eke the smalle stones,
Whiche as she chese out for the nones,
And of the redde see a part,
That was behovelich to her art,
She toke, and after that about
She soughte fondry sedes out
In feldes and in many greves
And eke a part she toke of leves.
But thing, which might her most availe,
She found in Crete and in Theffaile
In daies and in nightes nine,
With great travaile and with peine

She was purveyed of every piece
 And torneth homward into Grece.
 Before the gates of Eson
 Her chare she let away to gone
 And toke out first that was therinne,
 For tho she thoughte to beginne
 Such thing, as semeth impossible
 And made her selven invisible,
 As she, that was with thaire enclosed
 And might of no man be desclosed.
 She toke up turves of the londe
 Withoute helpe of mannes honde
 And heled with the grene gras,
 Of whiche an alter made there was
 Unto Echates the goddesse
 Of art magique and the maistresse.
 And este an other to invent,
 As she, which did her hole intent,
 Tho toke she feldwode and verveine,
 Of herbes ben nought better tweine,
 Of which anone withoute let
 These alters ben aboute set.
 Two fondry pittes faste by
 She made and with that hastely
 A wether, which was black, she slough,
 And out therof the blood she drough
 And did into the pittes two,
 Warm milk she put also therto
 With hony meind, and in such wise
 She gan to make her sacrifice

And cried and praide forth withall
To Pluto the god infernal
And to the quene Proserpine.
And so she fought out all the line
Of hem, that longen to that craft,
Behinde was no name laft,
And praid hem all, as she well couth
To graunt Eson his firfte youth.
This olde Eson brought forth was tho,
Away she bad all other go
Upon peril, that mighte falle,
And with that word they wenten alle
And left hem there two alone.
And tho she gan to gaspe and gone
And made signes many one
And said her wordes therupon,
And with spellinge and her charmes
She toke Eson in both her armes
And made him for to slepe fast
And him upon her herbes cast.
The blacke wether tho she toke
And hew the fleshe, as doth a coke,
On either alter part she laide,
And with the charmes that she faide
A fire down fro the sky alight
And made it for to brenne light.
And whan Medea figh it brenne,
Anone she gan to sterte and renne
The firy alters all about.
There was no beste, which goth out,

More wilde, than she semeth there.
 Aboute her shulders heng her hair,
 As though she were oute of her minde
 And torned into another kinde.
 Tho lay there certain wode cleft,
 Of which the pieces now and eft
 She made hem in the pittes wete
 And put hem in the firy hete
 And toke the bronde with all the blase
 And thries she began to rase
 About Eson, there as he slept.
 And eft with water, which she kept,
 She made a cercle about him thries
 And eft with fire of sulphre twies
 Full many another thing she dede,
 Whiche is nought writen in the stede.
 But tho she ran so up and doune,
 She made many a wonder sounne,
 Somtime lich unto the cock,
 Somtime unto the laverock,
 Somtime caceth as an hen,
 Somtime speketh as don men.
 And right so as her jargon straungeth
 In sondry wise her forme chaungeth,
 She semeth faire and no woman,
 For with the craftes that she can
 She was as who saith a goddesse,
 And what her liste more or lesse
 She did, in bokes as we finde,
 That passeth over mannes kinde.

But who that woll of wonders here,
What thing she wrought in this matere
To make an ende of that she gan
Such merveil herde never man.

Apointed in the newe mone,
Whan it was time for to done,
She fet a caldron on the fire,
In which was al the hole attire,
Whereon the medicine stood,
Of juse, of water and of blood,
And let it boile in suche a plite,
Till that she sigh the spume white.
And tho she cast in rinde and rote
And sede and floure, that was for bote
With many an herbe and many a stone,
Wherof she hath there many one.
And eke Cimpheius, the serpent,
To her hath all her scales lent,
Chelidre her yafe her adders skin,
And she to boilen cast hem in,
And parte eke of the horned oule,
The which men here on nightes houle,
And of a raven, which was tolde
Of nine hundred winter olde,
She toke the hede with all the bille.
And as the medicine it wille,
She toke her after the bowele
Of the seewolf, and for the hele
Of Eson with a thousand mo
Of thinges, that she hadde tho,

In that caldron to-gider as blive
 She put and toke than of olive
 A drie braunche hem with to ftere,
 The which anon gan floure and bere
 And waxe all freshe and grene ayein.
 Whan she this vertue hadde sene,
 She let the leeste droppe of alle
 Upon the bare floure down falle.
 Anon there sprong up floure and gras,
 Where as the droppe fallen was,
 And waxe anone all medow grene,
 So that it mighte well be sene.
 Medea thanne knewe and wist
 Her medicine is for to trift
 And goth to Eson there he lay
 And toke a swerd was of assay,
 With which a wounde upon his side
 She made, that there out may slide
 The blood withinne, which was olde
 And fike and trouble and feble and colde.
 And tho she toke unto his use
 Of herbes of all the best juse
 And poured it into his wounde,
 That made his veines full and founde.
 And tho she made his woundes close
 And toke his honde, and up he rose.
 And tho she yaf him drinke a draught,
 Of which his youth ayein he caught,
 His hede, his herte and his visage
 Lich unto twenty winter age,

His hore haire were away
And lich unto the freshe may,
Whan passed ben the colde shoures,
Right so recovereth he his floures.
Lo, what might any man devise,
A woman shewe in any wise
More hertely love in any stede
Than Medea to Jafon dede.
First she made him the flees to winne
And after that fro kith and kinne
With great trefor with him she stale
And to his fader forth with all
His elde hath torned into youthe,
Which thing none other woman couthe.
But how it was to her aquit,
The remembraunce dwelleth yit.

King Peleus his eme was dede,
Jafon bare croune on his hede,
Medea hath fulfilled his will,
But whan he shuld of right fulfill
The trouthe, which to her afore
He had in thile of Colchos swore,
Tho was Medea most deceived.
For he an other hath received,
Which doughter was to king Creon,
Creusa she hight, and thus Jafon,
As he, that was to love untrew,
Medea left and toke a newe.
But that was after sone abought.
Medea with her art hath wrought

Of cloth of golde a mantel riche,
 Which semeth worth a kinges riche,
 And that was unto Creusa sent
 In name of yest and of present,
 For susterhode hem was betwene.
 And whan that yonge freshe quene
 That mantel lapped her aboute,
 Anon therof the fire sprang oute
 And brent her bothe fleshe and bon.
 Tho cam Medea to Jafon
 With both his fones on her honde
 And said: O thou of every londe
 The most untrew creature,
 Lo, this shall be thy forfeiture.
 With that she both his fones slough
 Before his eye, and he out drough
 His swerd and wold have slain her tho,
 But farewell she was ago
 Unto Pallas the court above,
 Where as she pleigneth upon love,
 As she, that was with that goddesse,
 And he was leste in great distresse.

Confessor. Thus might thou se, what sorwe it doth
 To swere an oth, which is nought soth,
 In loves cause namely.
 My sone, be well ware forthy
 And kepe, that thou be nought forswore.
 For this, whiche I have told to-fore,
 Ovide telleth every dele.

Amans. My fader, I may leve it wele,

For I have herde it ofte say,
 How Jafon toke the flees away
 Fro Colchos, but yet herde I nought,
 By whom it was first thider brought.
 And for it were good to here,
 If that you list at my praier
 To telle I wold you beseche.

My sone, who that woll it seche,
 In bokes he may finde it write.
 And netheles, if thou wolt wite
 In the maner as thou hast preide,
 I shall the tell, how it is saide.

The fame of thilke shepes felle,
 Whiche in Colchos, as it befelle,
 Was all of gold, shal never deie,
 Wherof I thenke for to say,
 Howe it cam first into that ile.
 There was a king in thilke while
 Towardes Grece, and Athemas
 The cronique of his name was.
 And had a wif, which Philen hight,
 By whom, so as fortune it dight,
 He had of children yonge two.

Frixus the firste was of tho,
 A knave child, right faire with all.
 A doughter eke, the which men call
 Hellen, he hadde by his wife.
 But for there may no mannes life
 Endure upon this erthe here,
 This worthy quene, as thou might here,

Confessor.

Nota, qualiter aureum
 vellus in partes insule
 Colchos primo deven-
 nit. Athemas rex
 Philen habuit conju-
 gem, ex qua Frixum
 et Hellen genuit,
 mortua autem Philen
 Athemas Ynonem
 regis Cadmi filiam
 postea in uxorem dux-
 it, que more noverce
 dictos infantes in
 tantum recollegit o-
 dium, quod ambos in
 mari proci penes re-
 gem procuravit, unde
 Juno compaciens
 quandam arietem
 grandem aureo vesti-
 tum vellere ad litus
 natantem destinavit,
 super cuius dorsum
 pueros apponi iussit,
 quo facto aries super
 undas regressus cum
 solo Frixo sibi adhe-
 rente in Colchos ap-
 plicuit, ubi Juno dic-
 tum arietem cum suo
 vellere, prout in aliis
 canitur cronicis, sub
 arcta custodia collo-
 cavit.

Er that the children were of age,
 Toke of her ende the passage
 With great worship and was begrave.
 What thing it liketh god to have
 It is great reson to ben his.
 Forthy this king, so as it is,
 With great suffrance it underfongeth.
 And afterward, as him belongeth,
 Whan it was time for to wedde,
 A newe wife he toke to bedde,
 Whiche Yno hight and was a maide
 And eke the doughter, as men faide,
 Of Cadme, whiche a king also
 Was holde in thilke daies tho.

Whan Yno was the kinges make,
 She cast, how that she mighte make
 These children to her fader loth
 And shope a wile ayein hem both,
 Which to the king was all unknowe.
 A yere or two she let do sowe
 The lond with sode whete aboute,
 Wherof no corn may springen oute.
 And thus by sleight and by covine
 Aros the derth and the famine
 Through out the londe in such a wise,
 So that the king a sacrifice
 Upon the point of this distresse
 To Ceres, which is the goddesse
 Of corne, hath shapen him for to give
 To loke, if it may be foryive

The mischefe, which was in his londe.
But she, which knewe to-fore the honde,
The circumstance of all this thing,
Ayein the coming of the king
Into the temple hath shape so
Of her accord, that alle tho,
Which of the temple prestes were,
Have said and full declared there
Unto the king, but if so be,
That he deliver the contre
Of Frixus and of Hellen bothe,
With whom the goddes ben so wrothe,
That while tho children ben withinne,
Such tilthe shall no man beginne,
Wherof to get him any corne.
Thus was it said, thus was it sworne
Of all the prestes, that there are.
And she, which causeth all this fare,
Said eke therto, what that she wolde.
And every man than after tolde
So as the quene had hem preide.

The king, which hath his ere leide
And leveth all, that ever he herde,
Unto her tales thus answerde
And saith, that lever him is to chese
His children bothe for to lese
Than him and all the remenaunt
Of hem, which are appertenaunt
Unto the lond, whiche he shall kepe.
And bade his wife to take kepe

In what manere is best to done,
 That they delivered were sone
 Out of this worlde. And she anone
 Two men ordeineth for to gone,
 But first she made hem for to swere,
 That they the children shulde bere
 Unto the see, that none it knowe,
 And hem therinne bothe throwe.
 The children to the see ben lad,
 Where in the wise, as Yno bad,
 These men be redy for to do.
 But the goddesse, which Juno
 Is hote, appereth in the stede
 And hath unto the men forbode,
 That they the children nought ne flee,
 But bad hem loke into the see
 And taken hede of that they fighen.
 There swam a shepe to-fore her eyen,
 Whose flees of burned gold was all.
 And this goddesse forth with all
 Commaundeth, that withoute let
 They shulde anon the children set
 Above upon the shepes back.
 And all was do, right as she spak,
 Wherof the men gone home ayein.

And fell so, as the bokes sain,
 Hellen the yonge maiden tho,
 Whiche of the see was wo bego,
 For pure drede her hert hath lore,
 That fro the shepe, which hath her bore,

As she, that was swounende feint,
 She fell and hath her self adreint.
 With Frixus and this shepe forth swam,
 Till he to thile of Colchos cam,
 Where Juno the goddesse he fonde,
 Which toke the shepe unto the londe
 And set it there in such a wise,
 As thou to-fore hast herd devise,
 Wherof cam after all the wo,
 Why Jafon was forswore so
 Unto Medee, as it is spoke.

My fader, who that hath to-broke Amans.
 His trouth, as ye have tolde above,
 He is nought worthy for to love
 Ne be beloved, as me semeth.
 But every newe love quemeth
 To him, that newe fangel is.
 And netheles now after this,
 If that you list to taken hede
 Upon my shrifte to procede
 In loves cause ayein the vice
 Of covetise and avarice,
 What there is more I wolde wite.

My sone, this I finde write, Confessor.
 There is yet one of thilke brood,
 Which only for the worldes good
 To make a tresor of money
 Put alle conscience away.
 Wherof in thy confession
 The name and the condition

I shall here afterward declare,
Which maketh one riche, an other bare.

5. *Plus capit usura sibi, quam debetur, et illud
Fraude collocata sepe latenter agit.
Sic amor excessus quam sepe suos ut avarus
Spirat et unius tres capit ipse loco.*

Hic tractat de illa
specie avaricie, que
usura dicitur, cuius
creditor in pecunia
tantum numerata
plus quam sibi de
jure debetur incre-
mentum lucri ad-
auget.

Upon the bench sittend on high
With avarice usure I figh,
Ful clothed of his owne suite,
Which after gold maketh chafe and suite
With his brocours, that renne aboute,
Liche unto racches in a route.
Such lucre is none above grounde,
Which is nought of tho racches founde.
For where they se beyete sterte,
That shall hem in no wise asterte,
But they it drive into the net
Of lucre, whiche usure hath set.

Usure with the riche dwelleth,
To all that ever he bieth and selleth,
He hath ordeined of his sleight
Mesure double and double weight.
Outward he selleth by the lasse
And with the more he maketh his tasse,
Wherof his hous is full withinne.
He recheth nought be so he winne,
Though that there lese ten or twelve.
His love is all toward him selve
And to none other but he se,
That he may winne suche thre.

For where he shall ought yive or lene,
He woll ayeinward take a bene,
There he hath lent the smalle pefe.
And right so there ben many of these
Lovers, that though they love a lite,
That scarfly wolde it weie a mite,
Yet wol they have a pound ayein,
As doth usure in his bargain.
But certes such usure unliche
It falleth more unto the riche
Als well of love as of beyete,
Than unto hem, that ben nought grete.
And as who saith ben simple and pouer,
For felden is, whan they recouer,
But if it be through great deserte
And netheles men se pouerte
With pursuit of contenaunce
Full ofte make a great chevaunce
And take of love his avauntage
Forth with the helpe of his brocage,
That maken seme where it is nought.
And thus full ofte is love bought
For litel what and mochel take
With false weightes that thy make.

Now sone, of that I faide above
Thou wost what usure is of love.
Tell me forthy what so thou wilt,
If thou therof hast any gilt?

My fader nay, for ought I here.
For of tho points ye tolden here

Confessor.

Amans.

I will you by my trouth assure,
My weight of love and my mesure
Hath be more large and more certeine
Than ever I toke of love ayeine.
For so yet couthe I never of sleighte
To take ayein by double weighte
Of love more than I have yive.
For also wis mote I be thrive
And have remission of sinne,
As so yet couth I never winne
Ne yet so mochel soth to sain,
That ever I might have half ayein
Of so full love, as I have lent.
And if mine hap were so well went,
That for the hole I might have half,
Me thenketh I were a goddes half.
For where usure wold have double,
My conscience is nought so trouble,
I bidde never as to my dele
But of the hole an halven dele.
That is none excess as me thenketh,
But netheles it me forthenketh.
For well I wot, that wol nought be,
For every day the better I se,
That how so ever I yive or lene
My love in place that I mene,
For ought that ever I axe or crave
I can nothing ayeinwarde have.
But yet for that I wol nought lete
What so befall of my beyete,

That I ne shall her yive and lene
My love and all my thought so clene,
That toward me shall nought beleve.
And if she of her gode leve
Rewarde wol me nought ayein,
I wot the last of my bargein
Shall stonde upon so great a loft,
That I may never more the cost
Recouer in this world till I deie,
So that touchend of this partie
I may me well excuse and shall
And for to speke forth withall,
If any brocour for me went,
That point come never in min entent,
So that the more me merveileth
What thing it is, my lady eileth,
That all min herte and all my time
She hath and do no better byme.

I have herd said, that thought is free
And netheles in privete
To you, my fader, that bene here
Min hole shrifte for to here,
I dare min herte well disclose
Touchend usurie, as I suppose,
Whiche, as ye telle, in love is used.
My lady may nought ben excused,
That for o loking of her eye
Min hole herte till I deie
With all that ever I may and can
She hath me wonne to her man,

Wherof me thenketh, good reson wolde,
 That she fomdele rewarde sholde
 And yive a part, there she hath all,
 I not what falle herafter shall.
 But into now yet dare I fain,
 Her lifte never yive ayein
 A goodly word in such a wise,
 Wherof min hope might arise
 My grete love to recompense,
 I not how she her conscience
 Excuse wol of this usure
 By large weight and great mesure.
 She hath my love and I have nought
 Of that, which I have dere abought
 And with min herte I have it paide,
 But all this is aside laide,
 And I go loveles aboute.
 Her oughte stonde in full great doubte,
 Till she redresse fuche a finne,
 That she wol al my love winne
 And yiveth me nought to live by.
 Nought al so moch as graunt mercy
 Her list to say, of which I might
 Some of my grete peine alight.
 But of this point, lo, thus I fare,
 As he, that paieth for his chaffare
 And bieth it dere and yet hath none,
 So mote he nedes pouer gone.
 Thus bie I dere and have no love,
 That I ne may nought come above

To winne of love none encrese,
But I me wille nethelése
Touchend usure of love aquite,
And if my lady be to wite,
I pray to god such grace her sende,
That she by time it mot amende.

My sone, of that thou hast answerde Confessor.
Touchend usure I have al herde,
How thou of love hast wonne smale.
But that thou tellest in thy tale
And thy lady therof accushest,
Me thenketh tho wordes thou misusest.
For by thin owne knouleching
Thou saist, how she for one loking
Thy hole hert fro the she toke,
She may be such, that her o loke
Is worth thine herte many folde,
So hast thou well thin herte folde,
Whan thou hast that is more worthe.
And eke of that thou tellest forthe,
How that her weight of love uneven
Is unto thine, under the heven
Stood never in even that balaunce,
Which stont in loves governaunce.
Such is the statute of his lawe,
That though thy love more drawe
And peise in the balaunce more,
Thou might nought axe ayein therfore
Of duete, but all of grace.
For love is lorde in every place,

There may no lawe him iustify
 By reddour ne by compaigny,
 That he ne wol after his wille,
 Whom that him liketh spede or spille.
 To love a man may well beginne,
 But whether he shall lese or winne,
 That wot no man, til ate last.
 Forthy coveite nought to fast,
 My sone, but abide thin ende,
 Parcas all may to good wende.
 But that thou hast me tolde and saide
 Of o thing I am right well paide,
 That thou by sleighte, ne by guile
 Of no brocour hast otherwhile
 Engined love, for suche dede
 Is fore venged as I rede.

Hic ponit exemplum
 contra istos maritos,
 qui ultra id quod
 proprias habent uxores
 ad nove voluptatis
 incrementum alias
 mulieres superflue lu-
 crari non verentur.
 Et narrat, qualiter Ju-
 no vindictam suam in
 Eccho in huiusmodi
 mulierum lucris ad-
 quirendis de consilio
 mariti sui Jovis me-
 diatrix exstiterat.

Brocours of love, that deceiven,
 No wonder is though they receiven
 After the wrong, that they deserven
 For whom as ever that they serven
 And do plesfaunce for a while.
 Yet ate last her owne guile
 Upon her owne hede descendeth,
 Which god of his vengeaunce sendeth.
 As by ensample of time ago
 A man may finde it hath be so.
 It fell some time, as it was sene,
 The high goddesse and the quene
 Juno tho had in compaigny
 A maiden full of trechery.

For she was ever in accorde
With Jupiter, that was her lorde,
To get him other loves newe
Through such brocage and was untrewē,
All other wise than him nedeth.
But she, the which no shame dredeth,
With queinte wordes and with flie
Blent in such wise her ladies eye
As she, to whom that Juno trift,
So that therof she nothing wist.
But so prive may be nothing,
That it ne cometh to knoueleching,
Thing done upon the derke night
Is after knowe on daies light.
So it befell, that ate last
All that this flighe maiden cast
Was overcast and overthrowe.
For as the sothe mot be knowe,
To Juno it was done understonde,
In what manere her husbonde
With fals brocage hath take usure
Of love more than his mesure,
Whan he toke other than his wife,
Wherof this maiden was giltife,
Whiche hadde ben of his assent.
And thus was all the game shent.
She suffred him, as she mot nede,
But the brocour of his misdēde,
She, which her counseil yaf therto,
On her is the vengeaunce do,

For Juno with her wordes hote,
 This maiden, which Eccho was hote,
 Reproveth and faith in this wise :

O traiteresse, of which service
 Haft thou thin owne lady served,
 Thou haft great peine well deserved,
 That thou canst maken it so queint.
 Thy flighe wordes for to peint
 Towardes me, that am thy quene,
 Wherof thou madest me to wene,
 That my husbonde trewe were,
 Whan that he loveth elles where,
 All be it so him nedeth nought.
 But upon the it shall be bought
 Whiche art prive to tho doinges,
 And me full ofte of thy lesinges
 Deceived hast. Nowe is the day,
 That I thy wile quite may,
 And for thou hast to me conceled,
 That my lorde hath with other deled,
 I shall the fette in fuche a kinde,
 That ever unto the worldes ende
 All that thou herest thou shalt telle
 And clappe it out as doth a belle.
 And with that word she was forshape,
 There may no vois her mouthe escape,
 What man that in the wodes crieth,
 Withouten faile Eccho replieth.
 And what word, that him lust to fain,
 The same word she faith ayein.

Thus she, which whilome hadde leve
 To dwelle in chambre, mot beleve
 In wodes and on hilles both.
 For such brocage as wives loth,
 Which doth her lordes hertes chaunge
 And love in other places straunge.

Forthy if ever it so befalle,
 That thou, my sone, amonges alle
 Be wedded man, hold that thou hast.
 For than all other love is waste,
 O wife shal wel to the suffice,
 And than if thou for covetise
 Of love woldest axe more,
 Thou shuldest don ayein the lore
 Of alle hem that trewe be.

Confessor.

My fader, as in this degre
 My conscience is nought accused,
 For I no such brocage have used,
 Wherof that lust of love is wonne.
 Forthy speke forth, as ye begonne,
 Of avarice upon my shrifte.

Amans.

My sone, I shall the braunches shifte
 By order so as they ben set,
 On whom no good is wel beset.

Confessor.

*Pro verbis verba, munus pro munere reddi
 Convenit, ut pondus equa statera gerat.
 Propterea cupido non dat sua dona Cupido.
 Nam qui nulla ferit, gramina nulla metet.*

6.

Blind avarice of his lignage
 For counseil and for coufinage

Hic tractat super
 illa specie avaricie,
 que parcimonia di-

citur, cuius natura
tenax aliqualem
sue substantie por-
cionem aut deo
aut hominibus
participare nulla-
tenus consentit.

To be witholde ayein largeffe
Hath one, whose name is said scarsnesse,
The which is keper of his hous
And is so throughout avarous,
That he no good let out of honde,
Though god him self it wolde fonde,
Of yifte shuld he no thing have.
And if a man it wolde crave,
He muste thanne faile nede,
Where god him selve may nought spede.
And thus scarsnesse in every place
By refon may no thank purchase.
And nethes in his degre
Above all other most prive
With avarice stant he this.
For he governeth that there is
In eche estate of his office,
After the reule of thilke vice
He taketh, he kepeth, he halt, he bint,
That lighter is to fle the flint
Than gete of him in hard or neishe
Only the value of a reishie
Of good in helping of an other
Nought, though it were his owne brother.
For in the cas of yift and lone
Stant every man for him alone.
Him thenketh of his unkindship,
That him nedeth no felaship
Be so the bagge and he accorden,
Him reccheth nought, what men recorden

Of him or be it evil or good.
For all his truste is on his good,
So that alone he falleth ofte,
Whan he best weneth stonde alofte
Als well in love as other wise.
For love is ever of some reprice
To him that woll his love holde.
Forthy my sone, as thou art holde
Touchend of this tell me thy shrifte,
Hast thou be scarfe or large of yifte
Unto thy love, whom thou serveest.
For after that thou well deserveest
Of yifte, thou might be the bet.
For that good holde I well be set,
For which thou might the better fare,
Than is no wisdom for to spare.
For thus men sain in every nede,
He was wise, that first made mede.
For where as mede may nought spede,
I not what helpeth other dede.
Full ofte he faileth of his game,
That will with idel hond reclame
His hawke, as many a nice doth.
Forthy my sone, tell me soth
And say the trouth, if thou hast be
Unto thy love or scarfe or fre?

My fader, it hath stonde thus,
That if the tresor of Cresus
And all the golde of Octavien,
Forth with the richeffe of Yndien

Amans.

Of perles and of riche stones
Were all to-gider min at ones,
I fet it at no more accompt
Than wolde a bare straw amount
To yive it her all in a day,
Be so that to that swete may
It mighte like or more or lesse.
And thus because of my scarfnesse
Ye may well understond and leve,
That I shall nought the worse acheve
The purpos, which is in my thought,
But yet I yaf her never nought
Ne therto durst a profre make.
For well I wot, she woll nought take
And yive woll she nought also,
She is escheue of bothe two.
And this I trowe be the skill
Towardes me, for she ne will,
That I have any cause of hope,
Nought also mochel as a drope.
But toward other as I may se,
She taketh and yiveth in such degre,
That as by wey of frendelyhede
She can so kepe her womanhede,
That every man speketh of her wele.
But she wol take of me no dele,
And yet she wot wel, that I wolde
Yive and do bothe what I sholde
To plesen her in all my might,
By reson this wote every wight.

For that may by no wey asterte,
 There she is maister of the herte,
 She mot be maister of the good.
 For god wot wel, that all my mood
 And all min herte and all my thought
 And all my good, while I have ought,
 Als frely as god hath it yive,
 It shall be hers, while I live,
 Right as her list her self commaunde.
 So that it nedeth no demaunde
 To axe me, if I have be scarfe
 To love, for as to tho parfe
 I will answere and say no.

My sone, that is right well do.
 For often time of scarsnesse
 It hath ben seen, that for the lesse
 Is lost the more, as thou shalt here
 A tale, lich to this matere.

Scarsnesse and love accorden never,
 For every thing is wel the lever,
 Whan that a man hath bought it dere.
 And for to speke in this matere
 For sparing of a litel cost
 Full ofte time a man hath lost
 The large cote for the hood.
 What man that scarfe is of his good
 And wol nought yive, he shall nought take,
 With yift a man may undertake
 The highe god to plesse and queme,
 With yift a man the world may deme.

Confessor.

Hic loquitur contra istos, qui avaricia stricti largitatis beneficium in amoris causa confundunt. Et ponit exemplum, qualiter Croceus largus et hillaris Babionem avarum et tenacem de amore Viole, que pulcherrima fuit, donis largissimis circumvenit.

For every creature bore,
 If thou him yive, is glad therfore,
 And every gladship, as I finde,
 Is comfort unto loves kinde
 And causeth ofte a man to spede.
 So was he wise, that first yaf mede.
 For mede kepeth love in hous,
 But where the men ben coveitous
 And sparen for to yive a parte,
 They knowen nought Cupides arte.
 For his fortune and his apprise
 Disdeigneth alle covetise
 And hateth alle nigardie.
 And for to loke of this partie
 A sothe ensample, howe it is so,
 I finde write of Babio,
 Which had a love at his menage,
 There was no fairer of her age,
 And highte Viola by name,
 Which full of youth and full of game
 Was of her selfe and large and free.
 But such an other chinche as he
 Men wisten nought in all the londe,
 And had affaited to his honde
 His servant, the which Spodius
 Was hote. And in this wise thus
 The worldes good of suffisaunce
 Was had, but liking and plefaunce
 Of that belongeth to richesse
 Of love stode in great distresse,

So that this yonge lusty wight
 Of thing, which fell to loves right,
 Was evil served over all,
 That she was wo bego withall.
 Til that Cupide and Venus eke
 A medicine for the seke
 Ordeine wolden in this cas,
 So as fortune thanne was
 Of love upon the destine
 It fell right, as it shulde be.
 A freshe, a free, a frendly man,
 That nought of avarice can,
 Which Croceus by name hight,
 Toward this swete cast his sight
 And there she was cam in presence,
 She sigh him large of his despense,
 And amorous and glad of chere,
 So that her liketh well to here
 The goodly wordes, which he saide,
 And therupon of love he praide.
 Of love was all that he ment,
 To love and for she shulde assent,
 He yaf her yiftes ever among.
 But for men fain, that mede is strong,
 It was well sene at thilke tide
 For as it shulde of right betide,
 This Viola largeste hath take
 And the nigard she hath forsake.
 Of Babio she will no more,
 For he was grucchend evermore,

There was with him none other fare,
 But for to pinche and for to spare,
 Of worldes muck to get encres.
 So goth the wrecche loveles
 Bejaped for his scarfite.
 And he that large was and fre
 And set his herte to despende,
 This Croceus his bowe bende,
 Which Venus toke him for to holde,
 And shot as ofte as ever he wolde.

Lo, thus departeth love his lawe,
 That what man woll nought be felawe
 To yive and spende, as I the telle,
 He is nought worthy for to dwelle
 In loves court to be relieved.
 Forthy my sone, if I be leved,
 Thou shalt be large of thy despenſe.

Amans,

My fader, in my conscience
 If there be any thinge amis,
 I wolde amende it after this
 Toward my love namely.

Confessor,

My sone, well and redely
 Thou ſaiſt, ſo that well paid withall
 I am, and further if I ſhall
 Unto thy ſhrifte ſpecifie
 Of avarice the progenie,
 What vice ſueth after this,
 Thou ſhalt have wonder how it is
 Among the folke in any regne,
 That ſuch a vice mighte regne,

Whiche is comune at all affaies,
As men may finde now a daies.

*Cunēta creatura, deus et qui cunēta creavit,
Damnant ingrati dictaque facta viri.
Non dolor a longe stat, quo sibi talis amicam
Traxit, et in fine deserit esse suam.*

7.

The vice like unto the fende,
Which never yet was mannes frende,
And cleped is unkindeship,
Of covine and of felaship
With avarice he is witholde.
Him thenketh he shuld nought ben holde
Unto the moder, which him bare.
Of him may never man beware,
He wol nought knowe the merite,
For that he wolde it nought aquite,
Which in this worlde is mochel used,
And fewe ben therof excused.
To tell of him is endeles,
But thus I saie netheles,
Where as this vice cometh to londe,
There taketh no man his thanke on honde,
Though he with all his mightes serve,
He shall of him no thank deserve,
He taketh what any man will yive,
But while he hath o day to live,
He wol nothing rewarde ayein,
He gruccheth for to yive o grein,
Where he hath take a berne full.
That maketh a kinde herte dull,

Hic loquitur supra
illa aborta specie
avaricie, que in-
gratitudo dicta est,
cuius condicionem
non solum creator,
sed etiam cunēte
creature abhomi-
nabilem detestan-
tur.

To set his trust in such frendship,
 There as he find no kindnesship.
 And for to speke wordes pleine,
 Thus here I many a man compleigne,
 That howe on daies thou shalt finde
 At nede fewe frendes kinde.
 What thou hast done for hem to-fore,
 It is foryeten, as it were lore.
 The bokes speken of this vice
 And telle how god of his iustice
 By way of kinde and eke nature
 And every liflich creature,
 The lawe also, who that it can,
 They dampnen an unkinde man.

It is all one, to say unkinde
 As thing, which done is ayein kinde,
 For it with kinde never stood
 A man to yelden evil for good.
 For who that wolde taken hede,
 A beste is glad of a good dede
 And loveth thilke creature
 After the lawe of his nature
 And doth him ese. And for to se
 Of this matere auctorite,
 Full ofte time it hath befalle,
 Wherof a tale amonges alle,
 Which is of olde ensamplarie,
 I thenke for to specifie.

Hic dicit, qualiter
 bestie in suis benefi-
 ciis hominem ingra-

To speke of an unkinde man
 I finde, how whilome Adrian

Of Rome, which a great lorde was,
 Upon a day as he par cas
 To wode in his hunting went,
 It hapneth at a sodein went,
 After the chafe as he pursueth,
 Through happe, which no man escheueth,
 He felle unware into a pit,
 Where that it mighte nought be let.
 The pit was depe, and he fell lowe,
 That of his men none mighte knowe,
 Where he became, for none was nigh,
 Which of his fall the mischefe sigh.
 And thus alone there he lay
 Clepende and criend all the day
 For focoure and deliverance,
 Till ayein eve it fell per chance,
 A while er it began to night,
 A pouer man, which Bardus hight,
 Cam forth walkend with his asse
 And hadde gadered him a tasse
 Of grene stickes and of drie
 To felle, whom that wolde hem bie,
 As he, which had no livelode,
 But whan he mighte fuche a lode
 To towne with his asse carie.
 And as it fel him for to tarie,
 That ilke time nigh the pit
 And hath the trusse faste knit,
 He herde a vois, which cried dimme,
 And he his ere to the brimme

tum naturaliter pre-
 cellunt. Et ponit ex-
 emplum de Adriano
 Romano senatore, qui
 in quadam foresta ve-
 nationibus insistentem,
 dum predam perfe-
 queretur, in cisternam
 profundam nescia fa-
 milia corruit, ubi su-
 perperueniens quidam
 pauper, nomine Bar-
 dus, immissa cordula
 putans hominem ex-
 traxisse, primo sime-
 am extraxit, secundo
 serpentem, tercio A-
 drianum, qui paupe-
 rem despiciens aliquid
 ei pro beneficio red-
 dere recusabat. Sed
 tam serpens quam si-
 mea gratuita benevo-
 lencia ipsum singulis
 donis sufficienter re-
 muneraverunt.

Hath leide and herde it was a man,
 Which saide : O helpe here Adrian,
 And I will yive half my good.
 The pouer man this understood,
 As he that wolde gladly win,
 And to this lord, which was within,
 He spake and said : If I the save,
 What fikerneffe shall I have
 Of covenant, that afterwarde
 Thou wolt me yive such rewarde,
 As thou behightest now before ?
 That other hath his othes swore
 By heven and by the goddes alle,
 If that it mighte so befalle,
 That he out of the pit him brought,
 Of all the goodes, which he ought,
 He shall have even halven dele.

This Bardus said, he wolde wele.
 And with this worde his affe anon
 He let untruffe and therupon
 Down goth the corde into the pit,
 To whiche he hath at ende knit
 A staff, wherby, he saide, he wolde,
 That Adrian him shulde holde.
 But it was tho per chaunce falle,
 Into that pit was also falle
 An ape, which at thilke throwe,
 Whan that the corde cam down lowe,
 All sodeinly therto he skippte
 And it in both his armes clipte.

And Bardus with his asse anone
Him hath up draw, and he is gon.
But whan he figh it was an ape,
He wend all hadde ben a jape
Of faierie and fore him dradde.
And Adrian eft sone gradde
For helpe and cride and preide faste.
And he eft sone his corde caste.
But whan it came unto the grounde,
A great serpent it hath bewounde,
The which Bardus anone up drough.
And than him thoughte wel inough,
It was fantasme that he herde
The vois, and he therto answerde :
What wight art thou in goddes name ?
I am, quod Adrian, the same,
Whose good thou shalt have even halfe.
Quod Bardus than a goddes halfe,
The thridde time assaie I shall.
And cast his corde forth withall
Into the pit, and whan it came
To him, this lord of Rome it name
And therupon him hath adressed
And with his hond ful ofte blessed.
And than he bad to Bardus hale.
And he, which understood his tale,
Betwene him and his asse all softe
Hath drawe and set him up a losfe
Withouten harm all esely.
He saith not ones graunt mercy,

But straught him forth to the citee
 And let this pouer Bardus be.
 And netheles this simple man
 His covenant, so as he can,
 Hath axed. And that other faide,
 If so be that he him upbraide
 Of ought, that hath be spoke or do,
 It shall be venged of him so,
 That him were better to be dede.
 And he can tho no other rede,
 But on his asse ayein he cast
 His trusse and hieth homward fast.
 And whan that he came home to bed,
 He tolde his wife, how that he sped.

But finally to speke ought more
 Unto this lorde, he drad him fore,
 So that a word ne durst he sain.
 And thus upon the morwe ayein
 In the maner, as I recorde,
 Forth with his asse and with his corde,
 To gader wode, as he did er,
 He goth, and whan that he cam ner
 Unto the place, where he wolde,
 He gan his ape anone beholde,
 Which had gadered al aboute
 Of stickes here and there a route
 And leide hem redy to his honde,
 Wherof he made his trusse and bonde.
 Fro daie to daie and in this wise
 This ape profreth his servise,

So that he had of wode inough.
Upon a time and as he drough
Toward the wode, he figh beside
The greate gastly serpent glide,
Till that she cam in his prefence
And in her kinde a reverence
She hath him do and forth withall
A stone more bright than a cristall
Out of her mouth to-fore his way
She let down fall and went away,
For that he shall nought ben adrad.

Tho was this pouer Bardus glad,
Thonkende god and to the stone
He goth and taketh it up anone
And hath great wonder in his witte,
How that the beste him hath aquitte,
Where that the mannes sone hath failed,
For whom he hadde most travailed.
But all he put in goddes honde
And torneth home and what he fonde
Unto his wife he hath it shewed
And they, that weren bothe lewed,
Accorden, that he shulde it selle.
And he no lenger wolde dwelle,
But forth anone upon the tale
The stone he profreth to the sale,
And right as he him selfe it sette,
The jueller anone forth fette
The golde and made his paiement,
Therof was no delaieement.

Thus whan this stone was bought and sold,
 Homward with joie many fold
 This Bardus goth, and whan he cam
 Hom to his hous and that he nam
 His gold out of his purs withinne,
 He fonde his stone also therinne,
 Wherof for joy his herte plaide,
 Unto his wife and thus he saide :
 Lo, here my golde, lo, here my stone.
 His wife hath wonder therupon,
 And axeth him how that may be.
 Now by my trouth, I not, quod he,
 But I dare swere upon a boke,
 That to my marchant I it toke,
 And he it hadde whan I went.
 So know I nought to what entent
 It is now here, but it be grace.
 Forthy to morwe in other place
 I will it founde for to felle,
 And if it woll nought with him dwelle,
 But crepe into my purse ayein,
 Than dare I fausly swere and sain,
 It is the vertue of the stone.

The morwe came, and he is gone
 To seche about in other stede
 His stone to felle and so he dede
 And lefte it with his chapman there.
 But whan that he came elles where,
 In presence of his wife at home,
 Out of his purs and that he nome

His golde, he founde his stone withal.
And thus it felle him overal,
Where he it solde in fondrie place,
Such was the fortune and the grace.
But so well may nothing be hid,
That it nis ate laste kid.

This fame goth aboute Rome
So ferforth, that the wordes come
To themperour Justinian,
And he let sende for the man
And axed him, how that it was.

And Bardus tolde all the cas,
How that the worme and eke the beste,
Al though they made no beheste,
His travaile hadden well aquit.
But he, which had a mannes wit
And made his covenant by mouth
And swore therto all that he couth
To parte and yive half his good,
Hath now foryete how that it stood,
As he, which wol no trouthe holde.
This emperour al that he tolde
Hath herde and thilke unkindenesse,
He said, he wolde him self redresse.
And thus in court of jugement
This Adrian was than assent,
And the quarell in audience
Declared was in the presence
Of themperour and many mo,
Wherof was mochel speche tho

And great wondring among the pres.
 But ate laste nethelss,
 For the partie, which hath pleigned,
 The law hath demed and ordeigned
 By hem, that were avised wele,
 That he shal have the halven dele
 Throughout of Adrianes good.
 And thus of thilke unkinde blood
 Stant the memoire unto this day,
 Where that every wise man may
 Ensamplen him and take in minde,
 What shame it is to ben unkinde,
 Ayein the which reson debateth
 And every creature it hateth.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, in thy office
 I rede flee that ilke vice.
 For right as the cronique saith
 Of Adrian, how he his feith
 Foryat for worldes covetise,
 Ful oft in suche a maner wise
 Of lovers now a man may se
 Ful many, that unkinde be,
 For wel behote and evil last
 That is her life, for ate last,
 Whan that they have her wille do,
 Her love is sone after ago.
 What saist thou, sone, to this cas?

Amans. My fader, I wil say helas,
 That ever such a man was bore,
 Which whan he hath his trouthe swore

And hath of love what he wolde,
That he at any time sholde
Ever after in his herte finde
To falsen and to ben unkinde.

But, fader, as touchend of me,
I may nought stond in that degre.
For I toke never of love why,
That I ne may wel go therby
And do my profite elles where.
For any spede I finde there,
I dare wel thenken all about.
But I ne dare nought speke it out,
And if I dorst, I wolde pleigne,
That she, for whom I suffre peine
And love her ever aliche hote,
That nouthur yive ne behote
In rewarding of my service
It list her in no maner wise.
I wol nought say, that she is kinde,
And for to say she is unkinde,
That dare I nought by god above,
Which demeth every herte of love,
He wot, that on min owne side
Shall none unkindeship abide,
If it shall with my lady dwelle,
Therof dare I no more telle.
Now, gode fader, as it is
Tell me, what thenketh you of this?

My sone, of that unkindship,
The which toward thy ladisship,

Confessor.

Thou pleignest, for she woll the nought,
 Thou art to blamen of thy thought.
 For it may be, that thy desire,
 Though it brenne ever as doth the fire,
 Parcas to her honour misset,
 Or elles time come nought yet,
 Which stant upon thy destine.
 Forthy my sone, I rede the,
 Thenk well, what ever the befall.
 For no man hath his lustes alle,
 But as thou toldest me before,
 That thou to love art nought forswore
 And hast done non unkindenesse,
 Thou might therof thy grace blesse
 And leve nought that continuance,
 For there may be no such grevance
 To love, as is unkindeship,
 Wherof to kepe thy worship,
 So as these olde bokes tale,
 I shall the telle a redy tale.
 Now herken and be ware therby,
 For I will telle it openly.

Hic ponit exemplum
 contra viros amori
 ingratos. Et narrat,
 qualiter Theseus Cad-
 mi filius consilio suf-
 fultus Adriagne regis
 Minos filie in domo,
 que Labyrinthus di-
 citur, Minotaurum
 vicit, unde Theseus
 Adriagne sponsalia
 certissime promittens
 ipsam una cum Fedra
 sorore sua a Creta

Minos, as telleth the poete,
 The which whilom was king of Crete,
 A sone had and Androchee
 He hight. And so befell that he
 Unto Athenes for to lere
 Was sent and so he bare him there,
 For that he was of high lignage,
 Such pride he toke in his corage,

That he foryeten hath the scoles
 And in riot among the fooles
 He didde many thinges wronge
 And used thilke life so longe,
 Til ate last of that he wrought
 He found the mischefe, which he sought,
 Wherof it fell, that he was slain.
 His fader, which it herde sain,
 Was wroth, and all that ever he might,
 Of men of armes he him dight
 A stronge power and forth he went
 Unto Athenes, where he brent
 The pleine contre al aboute.
 The cites stood of him in doubte,
 As they, that no defence had
 Ayein the power, which he lad.
 Egeus, which was there king,
 His counseil toke upon this thing,
 For he was than in the citee,
 So that of pees into tretee
 Betwene Minos and Egeus
 They fell and bene accorded thus,
 That king Minos fro yere to yere
 Receive shal as thou shalt here
 Out of Athenes for truage
 Of men, that were of mighty age,
 Persones nine, of which he shall
 His wille don in speciall
 For vengeaunce of his sones deth,
 None other grace there ne geth,

secum navigio duxit.
 Sed statim postea ob-
 lito gratitudinis bene-
 ficio Adriagnam ip-
 sum salvantem in
 insula Chio spretam
 post tergum reliquit
 et Fedram Athenis
 sibi sponsatam ingra-
 tus coronavit.

But for to take the iuife,
And that was don in fuche a wife,
Upon which stood a wonder cas.
For thilke time so it was,
Wherof that men yet rede and fing,
King Minos had in his keping
A cruel monster, as faith the gef.
For he was half man and half beste,
And Minotaurus he was hote,
Which was begotten in a riot
Upon Pasiphe, his owne wife,
Whil he was out upon the strife
Of thilke greate siege at Troie.
But she, which lost hath alle joie,
Whan that she sigh this monster bore,
Bad men ordeigne anon therfore,
And fell that ilke time thus,
There was a clerke one Dedalus,
Which hadde ben of her assent,
Of that her world was so miswent,
And he made of his owne wit,
Wherof the remembraunce is yit,
For Minotaure fuche a hous,
That was so stronge and merveilous,
That what man that withinne went,
There was so many a sondry went,
That he ne shulde nought come out,
But gone amased all about.
And in this hous to locke and warde
Was Minotaurus put in warde,

That what life, that therinne cam,
Or man or beste, he overcam
And slough and fed him therupon.
And in this wise many one
Out of Athenes for truage
Devoured weren in that rage.
For every yere they shopen hem so,
They of Athenes er they go
Toward that ilke wofull chaunce,
As it was fet in ordenaunce,
Upon fortune her lot they cast,
Till that Theseus ate laste,
Which was the kinges sone there,
Amonges other that there were,
In thilke yere, as it befell,
The lot upon his chaunce fell.
He was a worthy knight withall.
And whan he figh his chaunce fall,
He ferde, as though he toke none hede,
But all that ever he might spede
With him and with his felaship
Forth into Crete he goth by ship,
Where that the king Minos he sought
And profreth all that he him ought
Upon the point of her accorde.
This sterne king, this cruel lorde
Toke every day one of the nine
And put him into the discipline
Of Minotaure to be devoured.
But Theseus was so favoured,

That he was kept till ate last,
 And in the meane while he cast,
 What thing him were best to do.
 And fell, that Adriagne tho,
 Which was the doughter of Minos,
 And hadde herd the worthy los
 Of Theseus and of his might
 And sigh he was a lusty knight,
 Her hole herte on him she laide.
 And he also of love her praide
 So ferforth, that they were alone,
 And she ordeineth than anone,
 In what maner she shuld him save.
 And shope so, that she did him have
 A clue of threde, of which withinne
 First ate dore he shall beginne
 With him to take that one ende,
 That whan he wold ayeinward wende
 He mighte go the same wey.
 And over this so as I say,
 Of pitch she toke him a pelote,
 The which he shulde into the throte
 Of Minotaure caste right.
 Such wepon also for him she dight,
 That he by reson may nought faile
 To make an ende of his bataile.
 For she him taught in sondry wise,
 Till he was knowe of thilke emprise,
 How he this beste shulde quelle.
 And thus short tale for to telle,

So as this maiden him had taught,
Theseus with this monster faught
And smote of his hede, the whiche he nam,
And by the thred, so as he cam,
He goth ayein, til he were out.
So was great wonder all about.
Minos the tribute hath relefed,
And so was all the werre cesed
Betwene Athenes and hem of Crete.

But now to speke of thilke fwete,
Whose beaute was withoute wan,
This faire maiden Adriane,
Whan that she sigh Theseus founde,
Was never yet upon this grounde
A gladder wight than she was tho.
Theseus dwelt a day or two,
Where that Minos great chere him ded.
Theseus in a prive sted
Hath with this maiden spoke and rouned,
That she to him was abandouned
In al that ever that she couth,
So that of thilke lusty youth
All prively betwene hem twey
The firste floure he toke away.
For he so faire tho behight,
That ever while he live might
He shuld her take for his wife
And as his owne hertes life
He wolde her love and trouthe bere.
And she, which mighte nought forbere,

So fore loveth him ayein,
That what as ever he wold fain
With all her herte she beleveth.
And thus his purpos he acheveth,
So that assured of his trouthe
With him she went, and that was routhe.
Fedra her yonge suster eke,
A lusty maide, a sobre, a meke,
Fulfilled of all curtesie,
For susterhode and compaignie
Of love, which was hem betwene,
To sen her suster made a quene
Her fader lefte and forth she went
With him, which all his first entent
Foryat within a litel throwe,
So that it was all over throwe,
Whan she best wend it shulde stonde.
The ship was blowe fro the londe,
Wherinne that they sailend were.
This Adriagne had mochel fere,
Of that the wind so loude blewe,
As she, which of the see ne knewe,
And praide for to reste a while.
And so fell, that upon an ile,
Which Chio highte, they ben drive,
Where he to her leve hath yive,
That she shall lond and take her rest,
But that was nothing for her best.
For whan she was to londe brought,
She, which that time thoughte nought

But alle trouth and toke no kepe,
Hath laid her softe for to slepe,
As she, which longe hath ben forwacched.
But certes she was evil macched
And fer from alle loves kinde.
For more than the beste unkinde
Theseus, which no trouthe kept,
While that this yonge lady slept,
Fulfilled of all unkindeship
Hath all foryeten the godeship,
Whiche Adriagne him hadde do,
And bad unto the shipmen tho
Hale up the saile and nought abide,
And forth he goth the same tide
Towarde Athenes, and her on londe
He lefte, which lay nigh the stronde
Slepend, til that she awoke.
But whan that she cast up her loke
Toward the stronde and sigh no wight,
Her herte was so sore aflight,
That she ne wiste what to thinke,
But drough her to the water brinke,
Where she beheld the see at large.
She sigh no ship, she sigh no barge
Als ferforth as she mighte kenne.
Ha lord, she saide, which a sennie,
As all the world shall after here,
Upon this wofull woman here
This worthy knight hath done and wrought,
I wend I had his love bought,

And so deserved ate nede,
 Whan that he stood upon his drede,
 And eke the love he me behight.
 It is great wonder, how he might
 Towardes me now ben unkinde,
 And so to let out of his minde
 Thing, which he said his owne mouth.
 But after this, whan it is couth
 And drawe into the worldes fame,
 It shall ben hindring of his name.
 For well he wote and so wote I,
 He yafe his trouthe bodily,
 That he min honour shulde kepe.
 And with that word she gan to wepe
 And forweth more than inough.
 Her faire tresses she to-drough
 And with her self toke such a strife,
 That she betwene the deth and life
 Swounende lay full oft amonge.
 And all was this on him alonge,
 Which was to love unkinde so,
 Wherof the wrong shall evermo
 Stond in cronique of remembraunce,
 And eke it axeth a vengeance
 To ben unkinde in loves cas,
 So as Theseus thanne was,
 All though he were a noble knight.
 For he the lawe of loves right
 Forfeited hath in alle way,
 That Adriagne he put away,

Which was a great unkinde dede.
 And after this, so as I rede,
 Fedra, the which her suster is,
 He toke in stede of her, and this
 Fell afterward to mochel tene,
 For thilke vice, of whiche I mene,
 Unkindeship where it falleth,
 The trouthe of mannes hert it palleth,
 That he can no good dede acquite,
 So may he stonde of no merite
 Towardes god and eke also
 Men clepen him the worldes fo.
 For he no more than the fende
 Unto none other man is frende,
 But all toward him self alone.

Forthy my sone, in thy persone
 This vice above all other fle.

My fader, as ye techen me,
 I thenke don in this matere.
 But over this now wold I here,
 Wherof I shall me shrive more.

Amans.

My gode sone, as for thy lore,
 After the reule of covetise,
 I shall the proprete devise
 Of every vice by and by.
 Now herken and be wel ware therby.

Confessor.

*Viribus ex clara res tollit luce rapina,
 Floris et in vita virgini mella capit.*

8.

In the lignage of avarice,
 My sone, yet there is a vice,

Hic tractat super
 illa specie cupida,
 que rapina nuncu-

patur, cuius mater
extorcio ipsam ad
deserviendum
magnatum curiis
specialius com-
mendavit.

His righte name it is ravine,
Which hath a route of his covine.
Ravine among the maisters dwelleth,
And with his servants as men telleth
Extorcion is now witholde.
Ravine of other mennes folde
Maketh his larder and paieth nought.
For where as ever it may be fought,
In his hous there shall no thing lacke,
And that ful ofte abieth the packe
Of pouer men, that dwelle aboute.
Thus stant the comune people in doubte,
Which can do none amendement.
For whan him faileth paiement,
Ravine maketh non other skille,
But taketh by strength al that he wille.
So ben there in the same wise
Lovers, as I the shall devise,
That whan nought elles may availe,
Anone with strengthe they assaile
And get of love the seline,
Whan they se time by ravine.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, thrive the here,
If thou hast ben a ravinere

Amans. Of love. Certes fader no,
For I my lady love so.
For though I were as was Pompey,
That all the world me wolde obey,
Or elles such as Alisaundre,
I wolde nought do fuche a sclaunder.

It is no good man, which so doth.

In gode feith, sone, thou faist soth.

Confessor.

For he that woll of purveance

By such a wey his lust avance

He shall it after fore abie,

But if these olde ensamples lie.

Now, gode fader, tell me one,

Amans.

So as ye connen many one,

Touchend of love in this matere.

Now list, my sone, and thou shalt here,

Confessor.

So as it hath befall er this

In loves cause how that it is

A man to take by ravine

The preie, which is feminine.

There was a roial noble kinge,

A riche of alle worldes thinge,

Which of his propre enheritaunce

Athenes had in governaunce,

And who so thenke therupon,

His name was king Pandion.

Two daughters had he by his wife,

The which he loved as his life.

The first doughter Progne hight,

And the seconde, as she well might,

Was cleped faire Philomene,

To whom fell after mochel tene.

The fader of his purveance

His doughter Progne wolde avance,

And yafe her unto mariage

A worthy king of high lignage,

Hic ponit exemplum contra istos in amoris causa raptores et narrat, qualiter Pandion rex Athenarum duas filias, videlicet Prognem et Philomenam habuit. Progne autem Tereo regi Tracie desponsata contigit, quod cum Tereus, ad instantiam uxoris sue Philomenam de Athenis in Traciam sororie visitacionis causa secum quadam vice perduceret, in concupiscenciam Philomene tanta severitate in itinere dilapsus est, quod ipse non solum sue violentia rapine virginitatem eius oppressit, sed et ipse linguam, ne factum detegeret, forcipe mutulavit, unde in perpetue memorie croni-

cam tanti raptoris
auferitatem miro or-
dine dii postea vindi-
carunt.

A noble knight eke of his honde,
So was he kid in every londe.
Of Trace he hight Tereus,
The clerke Ovide telleth thus.
This Tereus his wife home lad,
A lusty life with her he had,
Till it befell upon a tide,
This Progne, as she lay him beside,
Bethought her, how it mighte be,
That she her suster mighte se,
And to her lorde her will she saide
With goodly wordes and him praide,
That she to her mighte go.
And if it liked him nought so,
That than he wolde him selve wende
Or elles by some other sende,
Which might her dere suster grete
And shape, how that they mighten mete.
Her lorde anone to that he herde
Yaf his accomde and thus answerde :
I woll, he saide, for thy sake,
The wey after thy suster take
My self and bring her, if I may.
And she with that, there as she lay,
Began him in her armes clippe
And kist him with her softe lippe
And saide : Sire, graunt mercy.
And he sone after was redy
And toke his leue for to go.
In sory time did he so.

*Progne's
fault*

This Tereus goth forth to shippe
With him and his felasshippe.
By sea the righte cours he nam
Unto the contre till he cam,
Where Philomene was dwelling,
And of her suster the tiding
He tolde, and tho they weren glad
And mochel joie of him they made.
The fader and the moder bothe
To leve her doughter were lothe,
But if they were in presence,
And netheles at reverence
Of him that wolde him self travaile,
They wolde nought he shulde faile,
And that they praide yive her leve.
And she that wolde nought beleve
In alle haste made her yare
Toward her suster for to fare
With Tereus, and forth she went.
And he with al his hole entent,
Whan she was fro her frendes go,
Affoteth of her love so,
That his eye might he nought witholde,
That he ne must on her beholde,
And with the sight he gan desire
And set his owne hert a fire.
And fire, whan it to tow approcheth,
To him anon the strength accrocheth,
Till with his hete it be devoured,
The tow ne may nought be foccoured.

And so the tirann raviner,
 Whan that she was in his power,
 And he therto figh time and place,
 As he, that lost hath all his grace,
 Foryate, he was a wedded man,
 And in a rage on her he ran
 Right as a wolf, that taketh his pray.
 And she began to crie and pray :
 O fader, o moder dere,
 Now help, but they ne might it here,
 And she was of to litel might
 Defence ayein so rude a knight
 To make, whan he was so wode,
 That he no reson understode,
 But helde her under in such wise,
 That she ne mighte nought arise,
 But lay oppressed and disesed,
 As if a gofhawk hadde seised
 A brid, which durste nought for fere
 Remue. And thus this tirant there
 Beraft her such thing, as men sain,
 May never more be yolde ayein,
 And that was the virginite,
 Of such ravine it was pite.
 But whan she to her selve come
 And of her mischefe hede nome
 And knewe, how that she was no maide,
 With wofull herte thus she saide :
 O thou of alle men the worst,
 Where was there ever man that dorst

Do such a dede, as thou hast do?
That day shall falle, I hope so,
That I shall tell out all my fille
And with my speche I shall fulfille
The wide worlde in brede and length,
That thou hast do to me by strength,
If I among the people dwelle,
Unto the people I shall it telle.
And if I be withinne wall
Of stones closed, than I shall
Unto the stones clepe and crie,
And tellen hem thy felonie.
And if I to the wodes wende,
There shall I telle tale and ende,
And crie it to the briddes out,
That they shall here it all about.
For I so loude it shall reherce,
That my vois shall the heven perce,
That it shall soun in goddes ere.
Ha false man, where is thy fere?
O more cruel than any beste,
How hast thou holden thy behest,
Which thou unto my suster madest?
O thou, which alle love ungladest
And art ensample of all untrewes,
Now wolde god my suster knewe
Of thin untrouthe, how that it stood.
And he than as a leon wode
With his unhappy hondes strong
He caught her by the tresses long,

Garrulous

With whiche he bonde both her armes,
 That was a feble dede of armes,
 And to the grounde anone her cast,
 And out he clippeth also fast
 Her tunge with a paire of sheres.
 So what with blode, and what with teres
 Out of her eyen and of her mouth
 He made her faire face uncouth,
 She lay swounend unto the dethe,
 There was unnethes any brethe.
 But yet whan he her tunge refte,
 A litel part therof he lefte.
 But she withall no word may sounne
 But chitre and as a brid jargoune,
 And netheles that wode hounde
 Her body hent up fro the grounde
 And sent her there, as by his will
 She shulde abide in prison still
 For ever mo. But now take hede,
 What after fell of this misdede.
 Whan all this mischefe was befallle,
 This Tereus, that foule him falle,
 Unto his contre home he tigh.
 And whan he cam his paleis nigh,
 His wife alredy there him kept.
 Whan he her figh, anon he wept,
 And that he dide for deceit,
 For she began to axe him streit:
 Where is my suster? And he saide,
 That she was dede, and Progne abraide,

nightingale

As she, that was a wofull wife,
And stood betwene her deth and life,
Because she herde such tiding.
But for she sigh her lord weping,
She wende nought but alle trouth
And hadde wel the more routh.
The perles were tho forsake
To her and blacke clothes take,
As she that was gentil and kinde,
In worship of her susters minde
She made a riche enterement,
For she found none amendement
To sighen or to sobbe more,
So was there guile under the gore.
Now leve we this king and quene,
And torne ayein to Philomene.
As I began to tellen erst,
Whan she cam into prison ferst,
It thought a kinges doughter straunge
To make so sodein a chaunge
Fro welth unto so great a wo.
And she began to thenke tho,
Though she by mouthe nothing praide,
Within her herte thus she saide :
O thou, almighty Jupiter,
That highe sittest and lokest fer,
Thou suffrest many a wrong doing,
And yet it is nought thy willing.
To the there may nothing ben hid,
Thou wost, how it is me betid.

I wolde I hadde nought be bore.
 For than I hadde nought forlore
 My speche and my virginite.
 But gode lord, all is in the,
 Whan thou therof wolt do vengeaunce
 And shape my deliveraunce.
 And ever among this lady wepte
 And thought that she never kepte
 To be a worldes woman more,
 And that she wissheth evermore.
 But ofte unto her suster dere
 Her herte speketh in this manere
 And saide: Ha suster, if ye knewe
 Of min estate, ye wolde rewe,
 I trowe, and my deliveraunce
 Ye wolde shape and do vengeaunce
 On him, that is so fals a man.
 And netheles, so as I can,
 I woll you send some tokening,
 Wherof ye shall have knoueleching
 Of thing I wot that shall you loth,
 The which you toucheth and me both.
 And tho within a while als tite
 She wafe a cloth of filke all white
 With letters and ymagery,
 In which was all the felony,
 Which Tereus to her hath do,
 And lapped it to-gider tho
 And set her signet therupon
 And sent it unto Progne anon.

The messenger, which forth it bare,
What it amounteth is nought ware,
And netheles to Progne he goth
And prively taketh her the cloth
And went ayein right as he cam,
The court of him none hede name.

Whan Progne of Philomene herde,
She wolde knowe how that it ferde
And openeth that the man hath brought
And wot therby, what hath be wrought
And what mischefe there is befallē.
In swoune tho she gan down falle
And este arose and gan to stonde
And eft she taketh the clothe on honde,
Beheld the letters and thymages,
But ate last of fuche outrages
She said : Weping is nought the bote,
And swereth, if that she live mote,
It shall be venged other wise.
And with that she gan her avise,
How first she might unto her winne
Her suster, that no man withinne
But only they, that were swore,
It shulde knowe, and shope therfore,
That Tereus nothing it wist,
And yet right as her selven list,
Her suster was delivered sone
Out of prifon, and by the mone
To Progne she was brought by night.
Whan eche of other had a fight

In chambre there they were alone,
 They maden many a pitous mone.
 But Progne most of forwe made,
 Which sigh her fuster pale and fade
 And specheles and deshonoured
 Of that she hadde be defloured,
 And eke upon her lord she thought
 Of that he so untruely wrought
 And had his espousaile broke,
 She maketh a vow it shall be wroke.
 And with that word she kneleth down
 Weping in great devocion,
 Unto Cupide and to Venus
 She praid and saide thanne thus :
 O ye, to whom no thing avertere
 Of love may, for every herte
 Ye knowe, as ye that ben above
 The god and the goddesse of love,
 Ye witen well, that ever yit
 With al min herte and all my wit
 Sith first ye shopen me to wedde,
 That I lay with my lord a-bedde,
 I have ben trewe in my degre
 And ever thoughte for to be
 And never love in other place,
 But all only the king of Trace,
 Whiche is my lord and I his wife.
 But now alas this wofull strife,
 That I him thus ayeinward finde
 The most untrewe and most unkinde,

That ever in ladies armes lay,
And wel I wot that he ne may
Amend his wronge, it is so great,
For he to litel of me lete,
Whan he min owne suster toke
And me that am his wife forfoke.

Lo, thus to Venus and Cupide
She praid, and furthermore she cride
Unto Apollo the highest
And said: O mighty god of rest,
Thou do vengeaunce of this debate,
My suster and all her estate
Thou wost, and how she hath forlore
Her maidenhede, and I therfore
In all the world shall bere a blame
Of that my suster hath a shame,
That Tereus to her I sent.

And well thou wost, that min entent
Was all for worship and for good.
O lord, that yivest the lives food
To every wight, I pray the here
These wofull susters, that ben here,
And let us nought to the ben loth,
We ben thin owne women both.

Thus pleigneth Progne and axeth wreche,
And though her suster lacke speche,
To him, that alle thinges wote
Her sorwe is nought the lasse hote.
But he, that thanne herd hem two,
Him ought have forwed evermo

For sorwe, which was hem betwene.
 With signes pleigneth Philomene,
 And Progne saith: It shal be wreke,
 That all the world therof shall speke.
 And Progne tho sikenesse feigned,
 Wherof unto her lord she pleigned
 And preith, she mote her chambre kepe
 And as her liketh wake and slepe.
 And he her graunteth to be so.
 And thus to-gider ben they two,
 That wold him but a litel good.
 Now herke hereafter, how it stood
 Of wofull auntres that befelle.
 These susters, that ben bothe felle,
 And that was nought on hem alonge
 But only on the greate wronge,
 Which Tereus hem hadde do,
 They shopen for to venge hem tho.
 This Tereus by Progne his wife
 A sone hath, which as his life
 He loveth, and I this he hight.
 His moder wiste well she might
 Do Tereus no more greve
 Than flee his child, which was so leve.
 Thus she that was as who saith mad
 Of wo, which hath her overlad,
 Without insight of moderhede
 Foryat pite and losse drede
 And in her chambre prively
 This childe without noise or cry

She flough and hewe him all to pieces.

And after with diverse spieces

The flesh, whan it was so to-hewe,

She taketh and maketh therof a fewe,

With which the fader at his mete

Was served, till he had him ete,

That he ne wist, how that it stood.

But thus his owne flesh and blood

Him self devoureth ayeine kinde,

As he that was to-fore unkinde.

And than er that he were arise,

For that he shulde bene agrise

To shewen him the child was dede,

This Philomene toke the hede

Betwene two dishes, and all wrothe

Tho camen forth the susters bothe

And setten it upon the bord.

And Progne than began the word

And saide : O werst of alle wicke,

Of conscience whom no pricke

May stere, lo, what thou hast do,

Lo, here ben now we susters two.

O raviner, lo here thy prey,

With whom so falslich on the wey

Thou hast thy tirannie wrought,

Lo, now it is somedeale abought

And bet it shall, for of thy dede

The world shall ever sing and rede

In remembraunce of thy defame,

For thou to love hast done such shame,

That it shall never be foryete.
 With that he sterte up fro the mete
 And shove the bord into the flore
 And caught a swerd anone and swore,
 That they shulde of his hondes deie.
 And they unto the goddes crie
 Begunne with so loude a steven,
 That they were herde unto heven,
 And in the twinkeling of an eye
 The goddes, that the mischefe figh,
Her formes chaunged alle thre,
 Echone of hem in his degre
 Was torned into a briddes kinde
 Diverselich as men may finde.
 After thestate that they were inne
 Her formes were set a twinne,
 And as it telleth in the tale
 The first into a nightingale
 Was shape, and that was Philomene,
 Which in the winter is nought sene,
 For thanne ben the leves falle
 And naked ben the busshes alle.
 For after that she was a brid
 Her will was ever to ben hid
 And for to dwelle in prive place,
 That no man shulde sen her face
 For shame, which may nought ben lassed
 Of thing that was to-fore passed,
 Whan that she lost her maidenhede.
 For ever upon her womanhede,

Though that the goddes wold her chaunge,
She thenketh, and is the more straunge
And halt her clos the winter day.
But whan the winter goth away
And that nature the goddesse
Woll of her owne fre largeffe
With herbes and with floures both
The feldes and the medewes cloth,
And eke the wodes and the greves
Ben heled all with grene leves,
So that a brid her hide may
Betwene March, Aprille and May,
She that the winter held her clos
For pure shame and nought aros,
Whan that she figh the bowes thicke
And that there is no bare sticke
But all is hid with leves grene,
To wode cometh this Philomene
And maketh her first yeres flight,
Where as she fingeth day and night,
And in her song all openly
She maketh her pleint and faith: O why,
O why ne were I yet a maide?
For so these olde wise saide,
Which understoden what she ment,
Her notes ben of sliche entent.
And eke they saide, how in her songe
She maketh great joy and merth amonge
And faith: Ha, now I am a brid,
Ha, now my face may ben hid,

Pliny

Though I have lost my maidenhede,
 Shall no man see my cheekes rede.
 Thus medleth she with ioie wo
 And with her sorwe merth also,
 So that of loves maladie
 She maketh divers melodie
 And faith: Love is a wofull blisse,
 A wisdom, which can no man wisse,
 A lusty fever, a wounde softe.
 This note she reherfeth ofte
 To hem, which understonde her tale.

Now have I of this nightingale,
 Which erst was cleped Philomene,)
 Told all that ever wolde mene,
 Both of her forme and of her note,
 Wherof men may the story note.
 And of her suster Progne I finde,
 How she was torned out of kinde
 Into a swalwe swift of wing,
 Which eke in winter lith swouning
 There as she may no thing be sene,
 But whan the world is woxe grene *spring*
 And comen is the somer tide,
 Than fleeth she forth and ginneth to chide
 And chitereth out in her langage,
 What falsheede is in mariage,
 And telleth in a maner speche))
 Of Tereus the spouse breche.
 She wol nought in the wodes dwelle,
 For she wold openliche telle,

*swallow
 Progne
 brings
 secrets
 into
 open*

And eke for that she was a spouſe
Among the folk ſhe cometh to houſe
To do theſe wives underſtonde
The falſhode of her huſbonde,
That they of hem beware alſo,
For there be many untrewes of tho.

Thus ben the ſuſters briddes both
And ben toward the men ſo loth,
That they ne woll for pure ſhame
Unto no mannes hond be tame,
For ever it dwelleth in her minde
Of that they found a man unkinde,
And that was falſe Tereus.

If ſuche one be amonge us,
I not, but his condition
Men ſay in every region
Withinne town and eke without
Now regneth comunlich about.
And netheles in remembraunce
I woll declare, what vengeaunce
The goddes hadden him ordeigned,
Of that the ſuſters hadden pleigned.
For anone after he was chaunged
And from his owne kinde ſtraunged,
A lappewinke made he was
And thus he hoppeth on the gras,
And on his heed there ſtont upright
A creſt in token of a knight,
And yet unto this day, men ſaith,
A lappewinke hath loſt his feith

Tereus

And is the brid falsest of alle.

Confessor. Beware, my sone, er the so falle,
For if thou be of such covine
To get of love by ravine
Thy lust, it may the falle thus,
As it befell of Tereus.

Amans. My fader, goddes forbode,
Me were lever be fortrode
With wilde hors and be to-drawe,
Er I ayein love and his lawe
Did any thing or loude or still,
Which were nought my ladies will.
Men saien, that every love hath drede,
So folweth it, that I her drede,
For I her love, and who so dredeth
To plese his love and serve him nedeth.
Thus may ye knowen by this skill,
That no ravine done I will
Ayein her will by such a wey.
But while I live, I will obey
Abiding on her courtesie,
If any mercy wolde her plie.

Forthy my fader, as of this
I wot nought I have do amis.
But furthermore I you beseche,
Some other point that ye me teche,
And axeth forth if there be ought,
That I may be the better taught.

9. *Vivat ut ex spoliis grandi quam sepe tumultu,
Quo graditur populus, latro perurget iter.*

*Sic amor ex casu poterit quo carpere predam,
Si locus est aptus, cetera nulla timet.*

Whan covetise in pover estate
Stont with him self upon debate
Through lacke of his misgovernance,
That he unto his sustenance
Ne can non other waie finde
To get him good, than as the blinde,
Which seeth nought what shal after fall,
That ilke vice, which men call
Of robbery, he taketh on honde,
Wherof by water and by londe
Of thing, which other men beswinke
He get him cloth and mete and drinke,
Him reccheth nought, what he beginne
Through thefte, so that he may winne.
Forthy to maken his purchas
He lith awaitend on the pas,
And what thing that he seeth ther passe
He taketh his parte or more or lasse,
If it be worthy to be take
He can the packes well ransake.
So prively bereth none about
His gold, that he ne fint it out,
Or other juell what it be
He taketh it as his proprete
In wodes and in felde eke.
Thus robberie goth to seke,
Where as he may his purchas finde.
And right so in the same kinde

Hic loquitur super
illa cupiditatis specie,
quam furtum vocant,
cuius ministri alicuius
legis offensam non
metuentes tam in
amoris causa quam
aliter suam quam sepe
conscienciam offen-
dunt.

My gode sone, as thou might here,
To speke of love in the matere
And make a verray resemblance
Right as a thefe maketh his chevesance
And robbeth mennes goodes about
In wode and felde, where he goth out,
So be there of these lovers some
In wilde stedes where they come
And finden there a woman able
And therto place covenable,
Withoute leve er that they fare
They take a parte of that chaffare.
Ye, though she were a shepherdesse
Yet woll the lorde of wantonneffe
Assay, all though she be unmete.
For other mennes good is swete.
But therof wot nothing the wife
At home, which loveth as her life
Her lord and sit all day wisshing
After her lordes home coming.
But whan he cometh home at eve,
Anone he maketh his wife beleve,
For she nought elles shulde knowe
He telleth her, how his hunt hath blowe,
And howe his houndes have well ronne,
And how there shone a mery sonne,
And how his hawkes flownen wele.
But he wol telle her never a dele,
How he to love untrew was
Of that he robbed in the pas

And toke his lust under the shawe
Ayein love and ayein his lawe.

Which thing, my sone, I the forbede, Confessor.
For it is an ungoodly dede.
For who that taketh by robberie
His love, he may nought justifie
His cause, and so ful ofte sithe
For ones that he hath ben blithe
He shall ben after sory thries.
Ensamples for such robberies
I finde write as thou shalt here
Accordend unto this matere.

I rede, how whilom was a maide
The fairest, as Ovide saide,
Which was in her time tho.
And she was of the chambre also
Of Pallas, which is the goddesse
And wife to Marte, of whom prowesse
Is yove to these worthy knightes,
For he is of so greate mightes,
That he governeth the bataile,
Withouten him may nought availe
The stronge hond, but he it helpe,
There may no knight of armes yelpe,
But he fight under his banere.
But now to speke of my matere
This faire, freshe, lusty may
Alone as she went on a day
Upon the stronde for to play,
There came Neptunus in the way,

Hic loquitur contra
istos in amoris causa
predones, qui cum
suam furtive concu-
piscenciam aspirant,
fortuna in contra-
rium operatur, et
narrat, quod cum
Neptunus quandam
virginem nomine
Cornicem solam juxta
mare deambulantem
opprimere suo furto
voluisset, superveni-
ens Pallas ipsam e
manibus eius virgini-
tate servata gracios
liberavit.

Which hath the see in governaunce,
And in his herte such plesaunce
He toke, whan he this maiden sigh,
That all his hert aros on high.
For he so sodeinlich unware
Beheld the beaute, that she bare,
And cast anone within his hert,
That she him shall no way aftert,
But if he take in avauntage
Fro thilke maide some pilage,
Nought of the broches ne the ringes,
But of some other smale thinges
He thoughte parte, er that he went,
And her in bothe his armes hent
And put his hond toward the cofre,
Wherefor to robbe he made a profre
That lusty tresor for to stele,
Which passeth other goodes fele
And cleped is the maidenheed,
Which is the flour of womanheed.
This maiden which Cornix by name
Was hote, dredend alle shame,
Sigh, that she mighte nought debate,
And well she wist, he wolde algate
Fulfill his lust of robberie,
Anone began to wepe and crie
And said: O Pallas noble quene,
Shew now thy might and let be sene
To kepe and save min honour,
Help, that I lese nought my flour,

Which now under thy key is loke.
That word was nought so sone spoke,
Whan Pallas shope recoverir
After the will and the desire
Of her, which a maiden was,
And sodeinlich upon this cas
Out of her womanishe kinde
Into a briddes like I finde
She was transformed forth withall,
So that Neptunus nothing stal
Of such thing that he wolde have stole.
With fethers blacke as any cole
Out of his armes in a throwe
She fleigh before his eyen a crowe,
Which was to her a more delite
To kepe her maidenhede white
Under the wede of fethers blacke,
In perles white than forsake
That no life may restore ayein.
But thus Neptune his hert in vein
Hath upon robberie set.
The brid is flowe, and he was let,
The faire maid him hath escaped,
Wherof for ever he was bejaped
And scorned of that he hath lore.

My sone, be thou ware therfore,
That thou no maidenhede stele,
Wherof men see diseses fele,
So-as I shall the yet devise
Another tale therupon,
Which fell by olde daies gone.

Confessor.

Hic ponit exemplum
contra istos in causa
virginitatis lese pre-
dones, et narrat, quod
cum Calisto regis Li-
chaontis mire pulcri-
tudinis filia suam vir-
ginitatem Diane con-
servandam castissima
vovisset et in silvam,
que Tegea dicitur,
inter alias ibidem
nymphas moraturam
se transtulisset, Jupi-
ter virginis castitatem
subtili furto surripi-
ens, quendam filium,
qui postea Archas
nominatus est, ex ea
genuit, unde Juno in
Calistonam sevens
eius pulcritudinem in
urfe turpissime defor-
mitatem subito trans-
figuravit.

King Lichaon upon his wife
A doughter had, a goodly life
And clene maide of worthy fame,
Calistona whose righte name
Was cleped, and of many a lorde
She was besought, but her accorde
To love mighte no man winne,
As she, whiche hath no lust therinne,
But swore within her hert and saide,
That she woll ever ben a maide.
Wherefore to kepe her selfe in pees
With suche, as Amadriades
Were cleped wodemaidens tho,
And with the nimphes eke also
Upon the spring of freshe welles
She shope to dwelle and no where elles.
And thus came this Calistona
Into the wode of Tegea,
Where she virginite behight
Unto Diane, and therto plight
Her trowth upon the bowes grene
To kepe her maidenhede clene,
Which afterward upon a day
Was priveliche stole away.
For Jupiter through his queintise
From her it toke in suche a wise,
That sodeinliche forth withall
Her wombe arose and she to-swallow,
So that it mighte nought be hid.
And therupon it is betid,

Diane, whiche it herde tell,
In prive place unto a welle
With nimphes al a compaigny
Was come and in a ragery
She faide, that she bathe wolde,
And bad that every maiden sholde
With her all naked bath also.
And tho began the prive wo,
Calistona wax red for shame,
But they that knewe nought the game,
To whom no such thing was befall,
Anone they made hem naked alle,
As they nothinge wolden hide.
But she withdrewe her ever aside
And netheles into the flood,
Where that Diane her selve stood,
She thought to come unapperceived.
But therof she was all deceived.
For whan she came a litel nigh,
And that Diane her wombe figh,
She said : Away, thou foule beste,
For thin estate is nought honest
This chaste water for to touche,
For thou hast take fuche a couche,
Which never may ben hole ayein.
And thus goth she, which was forlein,
With shame, and the nimphes fledde,
Till whanne that nature her spedde,
That of a sone, which Archas
Was named, she delivered was.

And tho Juno, which was the wife
 Of Jupiter, wrothe and hastife
 In purpose for to do vengeaunce,
 Came forth upon this ilke chaunce,
 And to Calistona she spake
 And set upon her many a lacke
 And said: Ha, now thou art atake,
 That thou thy werk might nought forsake.
 Ha, thou ungoodly ypocrite,
 How thou art greatly for to wite.
 But now thou shalt full fore abie
 That ilke stelthe of micherie,
 Which thou hast bothe take and do,
 Wherof thy fader Lichao
 Shall nought be glad, whan he it wote,
 Of that his doughter was so hote,
 That she hath broken her chaste vow.
 But I the shall chastise now,
 Thy grete beaute shall be torned,
 Through which that thou hast be mistorned,
 Thy large front, thy eyen gray
 I shall hem chaunge in other way,
 And all the feture of thy face
 In such a wise I shall deface,
 That every man the shall forbere.
 With that the likenesse of a bere
 She toke and was forshape anone.
 Within a time and therupon
 Befell, that with a bow in honde
 To hunte and game for to fonde

Into that wode goth to play
Her sone Archas, and in his way
It hapneth that this bere came.
And whan that he good hede name,
Where that he stood under the bough,
She knewe him well and to him drough,
For though she had her forme lore,
The love was nought lost therfore,
Which kinde hath set under his lawe.
Whan she under the wode shawe
Her child beheld, she was so glad,
That she with both her armes sprad,
As though she were in womanhede
Toward him come, and toke none hede
Of that he bare a bow bent.
And he with that an arwe hath hent
And gan to teise it in his bowe,
As he, that can none other knowe,
But that it was a beste wilde.
But Jupiter, which wolde shilde
The moder and the sone also,
Ordeineth for hem bothe two,
That they for ever were save.

But thus, my sone, thou might have
Ensampler, how that it is to flee
To robbe the virginite
Of a yonge innocent away.
And over this by other wey
In olde bokes as I rede,
Such robberie is for to drede,

Confessor.

And namelich of thilke good,
 Whiche every woman that is good
 Defireth for to kepe and holde,
 As whilom was by daies olde.
 For if thou here my tale wele
 Of that was tho, thou might somdele
 Of olde ensamples taken hede,
 How that the floure of maidenhede
 Was thilke time holde in pris.
 And so it was, and so it is,
 And so it shall for ever stonde,
 And for thou shalt it understonde,
 Now herken a tale next suend,
 How maidenhede is to commend.

10. *Ut rosa de spinis spineto prevalet orta,
 Et lilii flores cespite plura valent,
 Sic sibi virginitas carnis sponsalia vincit,
 Eternos fetus que sine labe parit.*

Hic loquitur de
 virginitatis com-
 mendacione, ubi
 dicit, quod nuper
 imperatores ob
 tanti status digni-
 tatem virginibus
 cedebant in via.

Of Rome among the gestes olde
 I find, how that Valery tolde,
 That what man tho was emperour
 Of Rome, he sholde done honour
 To the virgin and in the wey,
 Where he her mete, he shulde obey
 In worship of virginite,
 Which tho was a great dignite,
 Nought onlich of the women tho,
 But of the chaste men also
 It was commended over all.
 And for to speke in speciall

Touchend of men ensample I finde.

Phirinus, which was of mannes kinde
Above all other the fairest
Of Rome and eke the comeliest,
That well was her, which him might
Beholde and have of him a fight.
Thus was he tempted ofte fore,
But for he wolde be no more
Among the women so coveited,
The beaute of his face streited
He hath, and thrust out both his eyen,
That alle women, whiche it sein
Than afterwarde of him ne rought.
And thus his maidenhede he bought.

So may I prove wel forthy
Above all other under the sky,
Who that the vertues wolde peise,
Virginite is for to preise,
Which, as thapocalips recordeth,
To Criste in heven best accordeth.
So may it shewe well therfore,
As I have tolde it here to-fore,
In heven and eke in erth also
It is accept to bothe two.

[Out of his fleshe a man to live*
Gregoire hath this ensample yive
And saith: It shall rather be told
Lich to an aungel manyfold

Hic loquitur, qualiter Phirinus, juvenum Rome pulcherrimus, ut illam suam virginitatem conservaret, ambos oculos eruens vultus sui decorem abhominabilem constituit.

* The verses included in brackets occur only in MS. Stafford, and in the printed editions.

Than to the life of mannes kinde,
There is no reson for to finde,
But only through the grace above,
In fleshe without fleshly love
A man to live chaste here.
And netheles a man may here
Of suche, that have ben er this,
And yet there ben, but for it is
A vertue, which is felde wonne,
Now I this matter have begonne
I thenke tellen over more,
Which is, my sone, for thy lore,
If that the list to taken hede
To trete upon the maidenhede.
The boke saith that a mannes life
Upon knighthode in werre and strife
Is set among his enemies,
The freile flesh, whose nature is
Ay redy for to sporne and fall,
The firste foman is of all.
For thilke werre is redy ay,
It werreth night, it werreth day,
So that a man hath never rest.
Forthy is thilke knight the best
Through might and grace of goddes sonde,
Which that bataile may withstonde,
Wherof yet dwelleth the memoire
Of hem, that whilome the victoires
Of thilke dedly werre hadden,
The high prowesse, which they ladden,

Wherof the foule stood amended
Upon this erth yet is commended.

An emperour by olde daies
There was, and he at all assaies
A worthy knight was of his honde,
There was none such in all the londe,
But yet for all his vassellage
He stood unwedded all his age,
And in cronique as it is tolde
He was an hundred winter olde.]
And if I shall more over this
Declare what this vertue is,
I finde write upon this thing
Of Valentinian the king
And emperour be thilke daies,
A worthy knight at alle assaies,
How he withoute mariage
Was of an hundred winter age
And hadde ben a worthy knight
Both of his lawe and of his might.
But whan men wolde his dedes peise
And of his knighthode of armes preise,
Of that he dide with his hondes,
Whan he the kinges and the londes
To his subjection put under,
Of all that prise hath he no wonder,
For he it set of none accompte
And said, all that may nought amounte
Ayein a point, whiche he hath nome,
That he his flesh hath overcome.

Hic loquitur, qualiter Valentinianus imperator, cum ipse octogenarius plures provincias Romano imperio belliger subjugasset, dixit se super omnia magis gaudere de eo, quod contra sue carnis concupiscenciam victoriam optinuisset, nam et ipse virgo omnibus diebus vite sue castissimus permanfit.

He was a virgine, as he said,
On that bataile his pris he laid.

Confessor. Lo now, my sone, avise the.

Amans. Ye, fader, all this may well be.

But if all other dide so,
The world of men were sone ago,
And in the lawe a man may finde,
How god to man by wey of kinde
Hath fet the world to multiply.
And who that woll him justify,
It is inough to do the lawe.
And netheles your gode sawe
Is good to kepe, who so may,
I woll nought there ayein say nay.

Confessor. My sone, take it as I say,
If maidenhed be take away
Withoute lawes ordenaunce,
It may nought failen of vengeaunce.

And if thou wolt the sothe wite,
Behold a tale, which is write,
How that the king Agamenon,
Whan he the citee of Lesbon
Hath won, a maiden there he fonde,
Which was the fairest of the londe
In thilke time, that men wift.
He toke of her what him list
Of thing which was most precious,
Wherof that she was daungerous.
This faire maiden cleped is
Criseid, the doughter of Crisis,

Which was that time speciall
Of thilke temple principall,
Where Phebus had his sacrifice,
So was it well the more vice.
Agamenon was than in way
To Troie ward and toke away
This maiden, whiche he with him lad,
So greate lust in her he had.

But Phebus, which hath great disdein
Of that his maiden was forlein,
Anone as he to Troie came,
Vengeaunce upon this dede he name
And send a comune pestilence.
They soughten than her evidence
And maden calculacion,
To knowe in what condicion
This deth cam in so sodeinly,
And ate laste redely
The cause and eke the man they founde,
And forth with al the same stounde
Agamenon opposed was,
Whiche hath beknownen all the cas
Of the folie, which he wrought.
And therupon mercy they sought
Toward the god in sondry wise
With praier and with sacrifice,
The maiden home ayein they sende
And yaf her good enough to spende,
For ever whiles she shulde live,
And thus the sinne was foryive

And all the pestilence cefed.

Confessor. Lo, what it is to ben encrefed
Of love, whiche is evil wonne.
It were better nought begonne
Than take a thing withoute leve,
Which thou must after nedes leve,
And yet have malgre forth with all.
Forthy to robben over all
In loyes cause if thou beginne,
I not what ese thou shalt winne.
My sone, be well ware of this,
For thus of robbery it is.

Amans. My fader, your ensamplarie
In loves cause of robbery
I have it right well understonde.
But over this how so it stonde,
Yet wol I wite of your apprise,
What thing is more of covetise.

11. *Insidiando latens tempus rimatur et horam
Fur, quibus occulto tempore furta parat.
Sic amor insidiis vacat, ut sub tegmine ludos
Prendere furtivos nocte favente queat.*

Hic tractat super
illa cupiditatis spe-
cie, que secretum
latrocinium dici-
tur, cuius natura
custode rerum nes-
ciente ea, que cupit,
tam per diem quam
per noctem absque
strepitu clanculo
furatur.

With covetise yet I finde
A fervaunt of the same kinde,
Which stelth is hote and micherie
With him is ever in compaignie.
Of whom if I shall telle soth
He stalketh as a peacock doth
And taketh his preie so coverte,
That no man wote it in aperte.

For whan he wot the lord from home,
Than woll he stalke about and come,
And what thing he fint in his wey,
Whan that he seeth the men away,
He steleth it and goth forth withall,
That therof no man knowe shall.
And eke full ofte he goth anight
Withoute mone or sterre light
And with his craft the dore unpiketh
And taketh therinne what him liketh.
And if the dore be so shet,
That he be of his entre let,
He woll in ate window crepe,
And while the lord is fast aslepe,
He steleth what thing him best list,
And goth his wey er it be wist.
Full ofte also by light of day
Yet woll he stele and make assay,
Under the cote his honde he put,
Till he the mannes purs have kut
And rifleth that he fint therinne.
And thus he auntreth him to winne
And bereth an horn and nought ne bloweth,
For no man of his counseil knoweth,
What he may get of his miching,
It is all bile under the wing.
And as an hound that goth to folde
And hath there take what he wolde
His mouth upon the gras he wipeth,
And so with feigned chere him slipeth,

That what as ever of shepe he strangle,
 There is no man therof shall jangle,
 And for to knowen who it dede.
 Right so doth stelthe in every stede,
 Where as him list his preie take.
 He can so well his cause make
 And so well feigne and so well glose,
 That there ne shall no man suppose,
 But that he were an innocent.
 And thus a mannes eye he blent,
 So that this crafte I may remeve
 Withouten helpe of any meve.
 There be lovers of that degre,
 Which all her lust in private
 As who faith gotten all by stelth
 And ofte atteignen to great welth
 And for the time that it lasteth.
 For love awaiteth ever and casteth,
 How he may stele and cacche his pray,
 Whan he therto may finde a way.
 For be it night, or be it day
 He taketh his part, whan that he may,
 And if he may no more do,
 Yet woll he stele a cufs or two.

Confessor. My sone, what saist thou therto,
 Telle, if thou diddest ever so.
 My fader, how? My sone, thus,
 If thou hast stole any cufs
 Or other thing, which therto longeth,
 For no man suche theves hongeth,

Tell on forthy and fay the trouth.

My fader, nay, and that is routh.

Confessio amantis.

For by my will, I am a thefe,

But she, that is to me most lefe,

Yet durst I never in privete

Nought ones take her by the kne

To stele of her or this or that.

And if I durst I wot well what,

And netheles but if I lie

By stelthe ne by robberie

Of love, which fell in my thought,

To her did I never nought,

But as men sain, where hert is failed,

There shall no castel be assailed,

But though I hadde hertes ten

And were as stronge as alle men,

If I be nought min owne man

And dare nought usen, that I can,

I may my selve nought recouer,

Though I be never man so pouer.

I bere an herte and here it is,

So that me faileth wit in this,

How that I shulde of mine accorde

The servant lede ayein the lorde.

For if my foot wold owhere go,

Or that min hond wolde elles do,

Whan that min hert is there ayein,

The remenaunt is all in vein.

And thus me lacketh alle wele.

And yet ne dare I nothing stele

Of thing, which longeth unto love,
 And eke it is so high above,
 I may nought well therto arecche.
 But if so be at time of speche
 Full felde, if than I stele may
 A worde or two and go my way,
 Betwene her high estate and me
 Comparifon there may none be,
 So that I fele and well I wote,
 All is to hevy and to hote
 To fet on honde without leve.
 And thus I mot algate leve
 To stele that I may nought take,
 And in this wise I mot forsake
 To ben a thefe ayein my will
 Of thing, which I may nought fulfill.

For that serpent, which never slept,
 The flees of gold so well ne kept
 In Colchos, as the tale is tolde,
 That my lady a thousand folde
 Nis better yemed and bewaked,
 Where she be clothed or be naked,
 To kepe her body night and day.
 She hath a wardein redy ay,
 Which is so wounderfull a wight,
 That him ne may no mannes might
 With swerd ne with no wepon daunt,
 Ne with no sleight of charme enchaunt,
 Wherof he might be made tame,
 And daunger is his righte name,

Whiche under lock and under key,
That no man may it stele away,
Hath al the tresor underfonge,
That unto love may belonge.
The leste loking of her eye
May nought be stole, if he it figh,
And who so gruccheth for so lit
He wolde sone fet a wite
On him, that wolde stele more.
And that me greveth wonder fore,
For this proverb is ever newe,
That stronge lockes maken trewe
Of hem that wolden stele and pike.
For so wel can there no man slike
By him ne by no other mene,
To whom daunger wol yive or lene
Of that tresor he hath to kepe.
So though I wolde stalke and crepe
And waite on eve and eke on morwe,
Of daunger shal I nothing borwe,
And stele wot wel may I nought.
And thus I am right wel bethought,
While daunger stont in his office,
Of stelthe, which ye clepe a vice,
I shal be guilty never mo.
Therefore I wold he were ago
So fer, that I never of him herde,
How so that afterward it ferde,
For than I mighte yet parcas
Of love make some purchas

By stelth or by some other way,
That now fro me stont fer away.

But, fader, as ye tolde above,
How stelthe goth a night for love,
I may nought wel that point forsake,
That ofte times I ne wake
On nightes, whan that other slepe.
But now, I pray you take kepe,
Whan I am logged in such wise,
That I by nighte may arise
At some window and loken out
And se the housing al about,
So that I may the chambre knowe,
In which my lady, as I trowe,
Lith in her bed and slepeth softe,
Than is min hert a thefe ful ofte,
For there I stonde and behold
The longe nightes, that ben cold,
And thenke on her, that lieth there.
And than I wishe, that I were
Als wise as was Nectanabus
Or elles as was Protheus,
That couthen both of nigromaunce
In what likenesse, in what semblaunce
Right as him list him self transforme.
For if I were of fuche a forme,
I say, thanne I wolde flee
Into her chambre for to se,
If any grace wolde falle,
So that I might under the palle

Some thing of love pike and stele.
 And thus I thenke thoughtes fele,
 And though there of no thing be soth,
 Yet ese as for a time it doth.

But ate laste whan I finde,
 That I am fall into my minde,
 And se, that I have stonde longe
 And have no profit underfonge,
 Than stalke I to my bed withinne.
 And this is all that ever I winne
 Of love, whan I walke on night.
 My will is good, but of my might
 Me lacketh both, and of my grace,
 For what so that my thought embrace,
 Yet have I nought the better ferde.
 My fader, lo, now have ye herde
 What I by stelth of love have do,
 And how my will hath be therto,
 If I be worthy to penaunce,
 I put it to your ordenaunce.

My sone, of stelth I the behete,
 Though it be for a time swete,
 At ende it doth but litel good,
 As by ensample how that it stood
 Whilom, I may the telle now.

Confessor.

I pray you, fader, say me how.

Amans.

My sone, of him, which goth by day
 By wey of stelthe to assay
 In loves cause and taketh his pray,
 Ovide said, as I shall say,

Confessor.

And in his Methamor he tolde
A tale, which is good to holde.

Hic in amoris causa
super isto latrocinio,
quod de die contingit,
ponit exemplum. Et
narrat, quod cum
Leucothoe Orchami
filia in cameris sub
arcta matris custodia
virgo preservabatur,
Phebus eius pulcritu-
dinem concupiscens,
in conclave domus
clara luce subintrans,
virginis pudicitiam
matre absente deflo-
ravit, unde ipsa in-
pregnata iratus pater
filiam suam ad sepe-
liendum vivam effo-
dit, ex cuius tumulo
florem, quem solsequi-
um vocant, dicunt
tunc consequenter
primitus accrevisse.

The poet upon this matere
Of stelte wrote in this manere.
Venus, which hath the lawe in honde
Of thing, which may nought be withstonde,
As she, which the tresor to warde
Of love hath within her warde,
Phebus to love hath so constreigned,
That he withoute rest is peined
With all his herte to coveite
A maiden, which was warded streite
Withinne chambre and kept so clos,
That selden was, whan she desclos
Goth with her moder for to play.
Leucothoe, so as men say,
This maiden hight and Orchamus
Her fader was. And befell thus,
This doughter, that was kept so dere,
And hadde be from yere to yere
Under her moders discipline
A clene maide and a virgine,
Upon the whose nativite
Of comeliheed and of beaute
Nature hath set all that she may,
That lich unto the freshe may,
Whiche other monthes of the yere
Sourmounteth, so withoute pere
Was of this maiden the feture,
Wherof Phebus out of mesure

Her loveth and on every fide
Awaiteth, if so may betide,
That he through any sleighte might
Her lusty maidenheed unright,
The which were all his worldes welth.
And thus lurkend upon his stelth
In his await so longe he lay,
Till it befell upon a day,
That he through out her chambre wall
Came in all sodeinlich and stall
That thing, which was to him so lese.
But wo the while, he was a thefe,
For Venus, which was enemy
Of thilke loves michery,
Discovereth all the pleine cas
To Climene, which thanne was
Toward Phebus his concubine.
And she to lette the covine
Of thilke love dedely wrothe
To pleign upon this maide she goth
And tolde her fader, howe it stood,
Wherof for sorwe well nigh wode
Unto her moder thus he saide :
Lo, what it is to kepe a maide.
To Phebus dare I nothing speke,
But upon her it shall be wreke,
So that these maidens after this
Mow take ensample, what it is
To suffre her maidenheed be stole,
Wherof that she the deth shall thole.

And bad with that do make a pit,
 Wherin he hath his doughter fet,
 As he, that woll no pite have,
 So that she was all quike begrave
 And deide anone in his presence.
 But Phebus, for the reverence
 Of that she hadde be his love,
 Hath wrought through his power above,
 That she sprong up out of the molde
 Into a flour, was named golde,
 Which stant governed of the sonne.
 And thus whan love is evil wonne,
 Full ofte it cometh to repentail.

Amans. My fader, that is no merveile,
 Whan that the councel is bewreied.
 But ofte time love hath pleied
 And stole many a prive game,
 Which never yet cam into blame,
 Whan that the thinges weren hid.
 But in your tale as it betid,
 Venus discovereth all the cas,
 And eke also brode day it was,
 Whan Phebus such a stelthe wrought,
 Wherof the maide in blame he brought,
 That afterwards he was so lore.
 But for ye faiden now to-fore,
 How stelth of love goth by night
 And doth his thinges out of sight,
 Therof me lust also to here
 A tale lich to the matere,

Wherof I might enfample take.

My gode sone, for thy sake
So as it befell by daies olde
And so as the poet it tolde,
Upon the nightes michery
Now herken a tale of poesie.

The mightiest of alle men,
Whan Hercules with Eolen,
Which was the love of his corage,
To-gider upon a pelrinage
Towarde Rome shulden go,
It fell hem by the waie so,
That they upon a day a cave
Within a roche founden have,
Which was real and glorious
And of entaile curious,
By name and Thophis it was hote.
The sonne shone tho wonder hote,
As it was in the somer tide.

This Hercules, which by his side
Hath Eolen his love there,
Whan they at thilke cave were,
He said, he thought it for the best,
That she her for the hete rest
All thilke day and thilke night.
And she, that was a lusty wight,
It liketh her all that he saide,
And thus they dwellen yet and pleide
The longe day. And so befell,
This cave was under the hill

Confessor.

Hic ponit exemplum
super eodem, quod de
nocte contingit. Et
narrat, qualiter Her-
cules cum Eole in
quadam spelunca no-
bili, Thophis dicta,
sub monte Timolo,
ubi silva Bachi est, hos-
picio pernoctarunt.
Et cum ipsi variis lectis
separatim jacentes
dormierunt, contigit
lectum Herculis vesti-
mentis Eole lectum-
que Eole pelle leo-
nis, qua Hercules in-
duebatur, operiri,
super quo Faunus a
silva descendens spe-
luncam subintravit,
temptans si forte cum
Eole sue concupis-
cencie voluptatem
nesciente Hercule fu-
rari posset. Et cum
ad lectum Herculis
muliebri palpata veste
ex casu pervenisset,
putans Eolen fuisse,
cubiculum nudo cor-
pore ingreditur,
quem sciens Her-
cules manibus appre-
hensum ipsum ad
terram ita fortiter
allisit, ut impotens
sui corporis effectus
usque mane ibidem
requievit, ubi Saba
cum nimphis silvestri-
bus superveniens ip-
sum sic illusum deri-
debat.

Of Timolus, which was begrowe
 With vines, and at thilke throwe
 Faunus with Saba the goddesse,
 By whom the large wilderneffe
 In thilke time stood governed,
 Were in a place, as I am lerned,
 Nigh by, which Bachus wode hight.

This Faunus toke a great infight
 Of Eolen, that was so nigh,
 For whan that he her beaute figh,
 Out of his wit he was affoted
 And in his herte it hath so noted,
 That he forfoke the nimphes alle
 And said, he wolde, how so it falle,
 Assay an other for to winne,
 So that his hertes thought withinne
 He fet and cast, how that it might
 Of love pike away by night,
 That he by day in other wise
 To stele mighte nought suffice.
 And therupon his time he awaiteth.
 Now take good hede, how love affaiteth
 Him, which with al is overcome.
 Faire Eolen whan she was come
 With Hercules into the cave,
 She said him, that she wolde have
 His clothes of and hers bothe,
 And eche of hem shulde other clothe.
 And all was do right as she bad,
 He hath her in his clothes clad

And cast on her his gulion,
Which of the skin of a leon
Was made, as he upon the wey
It slough, and over this to pley
She toke his grete mace also
And knet it at her girdel tho.
So was she lich the man arraied,
And Hercules than hath assaied
To clothen him in her array.
And thus they jape forth the day,
Till that her souper redy were.
And whan they hadden souped there,
They shopen hem to go to rest,
And as it thought hem for the best,
They bad, as for that ilke night,
Two sondry beddes shuld be dight,
For they to-gider ligge nolde,
By cause that they offre wolde
Upon the morwe her sacrifice.
The servants didden her office
And sondry beddes made anone,
Wherin that they to reste gone
Eche by hem self in sondry place.
Fair Eolen hath set the mace
Besides her beddes heved above,
And with the clothes of her love
She helled all her bed aboute.
And he, which had nothing in doubte,
Her wimpel wonde about his cheke,
Her kirtel and her mantel eke

Abrode upon his bed he spredde,
And thus they slepen both a bedde.
And what of travail, what of wine
The servaunts like to dronken swine
Beganne for to route faste.
This Faunus, which his stelthe caste,
Was thanne comen to the cave
And found, they weren alle fave
Withoute noyse, and in he went,
The derke night his sighte blent,
And yet it hapned him to go,
Where Eolen a bedde tho
Was laid alone for to slepe.
But for he wolde take kepe,
Whose bed it was, he made assay
And of a leon, where it lay,
The cote he founde and eke he feleth
The mace and than his herte keleth,
That there durst he nought abide,
But stalketh upon every side
And sought aboute with his honde
That other bed, till that he fonde,
Where lay bewimpled a visage.
Tho was he glad in his corage,
For he her kirtel founde also
And eke her mantel bothe two
Bespred upon the bedde alofte.
He made him naked than and softe
Into the bed unware he crepte,
Where Hercules that time slepte

And wende well it were she.
And thus in stede of Eole
Anone he profreth him to love,
But he, which felte a man above,
This Hercules him threw to grounde
So fore, that they have him founde
Liggende there upon the morwe,
And tho was nought a litel forwe,
That Faunus of him selve made.
But elles there they were all glade
And loughen him to sorne aboute,
Saba with nimphes all a route
Came down to loke, how that it ferde,
And whan that they the sothe herde,
He was bejaped over all.

My sone, be thou ware with all
To seche suche micheries,
But if thou have the better aspies
In aunter, if the so betide
As Faunus dide thilke tide,
Wherof thou might be shamed so.

Confessor.

Min holy fader, certes no.
But if I hadde right good leve,
Such micherie I thenke leve,
My fainte herte woll nought serve,
For malgre wolde I nought deserve
In thilke place, where I love.
But for ye tolden here above
Of covetise and his pilage,
If there be more of that lignage,

Amans.

Which toucheth to my shrifte, I pray,
That ye therof me wolde fay,
So that I may the vice escheue.

Confessor. Sone, if I by order sue
The vices, as they stonde a rowe
Of covetise, thou shalt knowe,
There is yet one, which is the last,
In whom there may no vertue last,
For he with god him self debateth,
Wherof that all the heven him hateth.

12. *Sacrilegus tantum furto loca sacra prophanat,
Ut sibi sint agri, sic domus alma dei.
Nec locus est, in quo non temptat amans que amatur,
Si que posse nequit, carpere velle capit.*

Hic tractat super
ultima cupiditatis
specie, que sacrile-
gium dicitur, cuius
furtum ea que altif-
simo sanctificantur
bona depredans
ecclesie tantum
spoliis insidiatur.

The highe god, whiche alle good
Purveied hath for mannes food
Of clothes and of mete and drinke,
Bade Adam, that he shulde swinke
To geten him his sustenance,
And eke he set an ordenaunce
Upon the lawe of Moises,
That though a man be haveles,
Yet shall he nought by thefte stele.
But now a daies there ben fele,
That woll no labour undertake,
But what they may by stelthe take
They holde it fikerliche wonne.
And thus the lawe is overronne,
Which god hath set, and namely
With hem that so untruely
The goodes robbe of holy chirche.

The thefte, which they thanne wirche,
By name is cleped facrilegge,
Ayein the whom I thenke allegge,
[Upon the points as we ben taught*
Stont facrilege, and elles nought
The firfte point is for to fay,
Whan that a thefe fhall ftele away
The holy thing from holy place.
The feconde is, if he purchace
By way of theft unholy thinge,
Whiche he upon his knowlechinge
Fro holy place away toke.
The thirde point, as faith the boke,
Is fuche, as where as ever it be,
In wode, in felde or in cite,
Shall no man ftele by no wife
That halowed is to the fervice
Of god, whiche alle thinges wote,
But there is nouthur cold ne hote,
Whiche he for god or man woll spare,
So that the body may wel fare,
And that he may the world efcape,
The heven him thinketh is but a jape
Of his condicion to telle,]
Which rifeleth bothe boke and belle.
So forth with all the remenaunt
To goddes hous appurtenaunt,
Where that he fhulde bid his bede,
He doth his theft in holy ftede,

* Only in MS. Stafford, and Berthelette's editions.

And taketh what thing he fint therin.
 For whan he seeth that he may win,
 He wondeth for no curfednesse,
 That he ne breketh the holinesse
 And doth to god no reverence.
 For he hath lost his conscience,
 That though the prest therfore curse,
 He saith, he fareth nought the worse.
 And for to speke it other wise,
 What man that lasseth the fraunchise
 And taketh of holy chirch his pray,
 I not what bedes he shall pray,
 Whan he fro god, which hath yive all,
 The purpartie in speciall,
 Which unto Crist him self is due,
 Benimth, he may nought wel eschue
 The peine comend afterward,
 For he hath made his foreward
 With sacrilege for to dwelle,
 Which hath his heritage in helle.

And if we rede of tholde lawe,
 I finde write in thilke lawe
 Of princes, how there weren thre
 Coupable fore in this degre.
 That one of hem was cleped thus
 The proude king Antiochus,
 That other Nabuzardan hight,
 Which of his cruelte behight
 The temple to destruye and waste,
 And so he did in alle haste,

The thridde, which was after shamed,
Was Nabugodonosor named,
And he Jerusalem put under
Of sacrilege and many a wonder
There in the holy temple he wrought,
Which Baltazar his heire abought,
Whan Mane Techel Phares write
Was on the wall, as thou might wite,
So as the bible it hath declared.
But for al that it is nought spared
Yet now a day, that men ne pille
And maken argument and skille
To sacrilege as it belongeth,
For what man that there after longeth
He taketh none hede what he doth.
[And if a man shall telle soth,*
Of guile and of subtilite
Is none so fligh in his degre
To feigne a thing for his beyete,
As is this vice of whiche I trete.
He can so priveliche pike,
He can so well his wordes slike
To put away fuspicion,
That in his excusation
There shall no man defalte finde.
And thus full ofte men be blinde,
That stonden in his word deceived,
Er his queintise be perceived.

* Only in MS. Stafford, and Berthelette's editions.

But netheles yet other while
 For all his sleight and all his guile,
 Of that he wolde his werke forsake
 He is atteint and overtake,
 Wherof thou shalte a tale rede,
 In Rome as it befell in dede.

Hic loquitur de illis,
 qui larvata conscien-
 cia sacrilegium sibi
 licere fingunt. Et
 narrat, quod cum
 quidam Lucius cleri-
 cus famosus et impe-
 ratori notus deum
 suum Apollinem in
 templo Rome de anu-
 lo suo, pallio et barba
 aurea spoliasset, ipse
 tandem apprehensus
 et coram imperatore
 accusatus taliter se
 excusando ait: anu-
 lum a deo recepi,
 quia ipse digito pro-
 tenso ex sua largitate
 anulum hunc gratiose
 michi obtulit, pallium
 ex lamina aureo con-
 structum tuli, quia
 aurum maxime pon-
 derosum et frigidum
 naturaliter consistit,
 unde nec in estate
 propter pondus, nec
 in yeme propter fri-
 gus ad dei vestes utile
 fuit, barbam a deo
 deposui, qui ipsum
 patri suo assimilare
 volui. Nam et A-
 pollo, qui ante ipsum
 in templo stetit, abs-
 que barba juvenis
 apparuit, et sic ea que
 gessi non ex furto, sed
 honestate processisse
 manifeste declaravi.

Er Rome cam to the creaunce
 Of Cristes feith, it fell perchaunce,
 Cesar, which tho was emperour,
 Him liste for to done honour
 Unto the temple Apollinis,
 And made an ymage upon this,
 The which was cleped Apollo,
 Was none so riche in Rome tho.
 Of plate of golde a berde he hadde,
 The which his brest all over spradde.
 Of golde also withoute faile
 His mantell was of large entaile
 Beset with perrie all about,
 Forth right he straught his finger out,
 Upon the which he had a ringe,
 To seen it was a riche thing,
 A fine carbuncle for the nones
 Most precious of alle stones.

And fell that time in Rome thus
 There was a clerke one Lucius,
 A courteour, a famous man,
 Of every wit somewhat he can,
 Out take that him lacketh reule
 His owne estat to guide and reule.

How so it stood of his speking,
He was nought wise in his doing,
But every riote ate last
Mot nedes falle and may nought laste.
After the mede of his deserte.
So fell this clerke in pouerte
And wiste nought how for to rise,
Wherof in many a sondry wise
He cast his wittes here and ther,
He loketh nigh, he loketh fer,
Till on a time that he come
Into the temple and hede he nome,
Where that the god Apollo stood,
He sigh the richesse and the good
And thought he wolde by some way
The tresor picke and stele away.
And therupon so sleighly wrought,
That his purpose about he brought,
And went away unapperceived.
Thus hath the man his god deceived,
His ring, his mantel and his berd,
As he, which nothing was aferd,
All prively with him he bare.
And whan the wardeins weren ware
Of that her god despuiled was,
Hem thought it was a wonder cas,
How that a man for any wele
Durst in so holy place stele,
And namely so great a thing.
This tale came unto the king,

And was through spoken over all.
 But for to knowe in speciall,
 What maner man hath do the dede,
 They soughten helpe upon the nede
 And maden calculacion,
 Wherof by demonstracion
 The man was founde with the good,
 In iugement and whan he stood,
 The king hath axed of him thus :
 Say thou, unsely Lucius,
 Why hast thou don this sacrilege ?
 My lord, if I the cause allegge,
 Quod he ayein, me thenketh this,
 That I have do nothing amis.
 Thre points ther ben, which I have do,
 Wherof the firste point stant so,
 That I the ring have take away,
 As unto that this woll I say,
 Whan I the god behelde about,
 I sigh, how he his hond straught out
 And profred me the ring to yive.
 And I, which wolde gladly live,
 Out of pouerte, through his largesse
 It underfang, so that I gesse,
 As therof I am nought to wite.
 And overmore I woll me quite
 Of gold that I the mantel toke,
 Gold in his kind, as faith the boke,
 Is hevy both and colde also.
 And for that it was hevy so,

Me thought it was no garnement
Unto the god convenient
To clothen him the former tide,
I thought upon that other side,
How gold is colde, and such a clothe
By reason oughte to be lothe
In winter time for the chele.
And thus thenkende thoughtes fele
As I min eie aboute cast,
His large berd than ate last
I sigh and thought anone therefore,
How that his fader him before,
Which stood upon the same place,
Was berdles with a yongly face.
And in such wise, as ye have herde,
I toke away the fones berde
For that his fader hadde none
To make hem liche, and here upon
I axe for to ben excused.

Lo thus, where sacrilege is used,
A man can feigne his conscience
And right upon such evidence]
In loves cause if I shall trete,
There ben of suche small and great,
If they no leiser finden elles,
They wol nought wonden for the belles,
Ne though they sen the prest at masse,
That wol they leten overpasse,
If that they finden her love there,
They stande and tellen in her ere

And axe of god none other grace,
While they ben in that holy place.
But er they gon, some avauntage
There will they have, and some pilage
Of goodly word or of beheste,
Or elles they take ate leste
Out of her honde a ring or glove,
So nigh the weder they will hove,
As who faith she shall nought foryete,
Now I this token of her have gete.
Thus halwe they the highe feste,
Such thefte may no chirch areste,
For all is lefull that hem liketh,
To whom that elles it misliketh.
And eke right in the selve kinde
In great citees men may finde
This lusty folk, that make hem gay,
And waite upon the haliday,
In chirches and in minstres eke
They gon the women for to seke,
And where that such one goth about
To-fore the fairest of the route,
Where as they sitten all a rewe,
There will he moste his body shewe,
His croket kempt and theron set
An ouche, with a chapelet
Or elles one of grene leves,
Which late came oute of the greves,
All for he shulde seme fressh.
And thus he loketh on his flessh

Right as an hawke which hath a fight
Upon the fowl, there he shall light,
And as he were a fairie,
He sheweth him to-fore her eye
In holy place where they fitte
Al for to make her hertes flitte.
His eye no where woll abide
But loke and pry on every side
On her and her, as him best liketh,
And other while among he fiketh,
Thenketh one of hem that was for me,
And so there thenken two or thre,
And yet he loveth none of alle,
But where as ever his chaunce falle,
And netheles to say a soth
The cause, why that he so doth,
Is for to stele an herte or two
Out of the chirche er that he go.
And as I said it here above,
All is that sacrilegge of love,
For well may be he steleth away,
That he never after yelde may.
Tell me forthy, my sone, anone,
Hast thou do sacrilegge or none,
As I have said in this manere.

My fader, as of this matere
I woll you tellen redely
What I have do, but truely
I may excuse min entent,
That I never yet to chirche went,

Confessio amantis.

In such maner as ye me thrive,
 For no woman that is on live.
 The cause why I have it laft
 May be, for I unto that craft
 Am nothing able for so stele,
 Though there be women nought so fele.
 But yet woll I nought saie this,
 Whan I am there my lady is,
 In whom lith holy my quarele,
 And she to chirche or to chapele
 Woll go to matins or to messe,
 That time I waite well and gesse,
 To chirche I come and there I stonde,
 And though I take a boke on honde,
 My contenaunce is on the boke,
 But toward her is all my loke.
 And if so falle, that I pray
 Unto my god and somewhat say
 Of *pater noster* or of crede,
 All is for that I wolde spede,
 So that my bede in holy chirche
 There mighte some miracle wirche
 My ladies herte for to chaunge,
 Which ever hath be to me so straunge,
 So that all my devocion
 And all my contemplacion
 With all min herte and my corage
 Is only set on her ymage.
 And ever I waite upon the tide,
 If she loke any thing aside,

That I me may of her avise,
Anone I am with covetise
So smite, that me were lese
To be in holy chirche a thefe,
But nought to stele a vestement,
For that is nothing my talent.
But I wol stele, if that I might,
A glad word or a goodly fight,
And ever my service I profre,
And namely whan she woll gone offre,
For than I lede her, if I may.
For somewhat wold I stele away,
Whan I beclippe her on the waste,
Yet ate last I stele a taste,
And other while graunt mercy
She saith, and so win I therby
A lusty touch, a good worde eke,
But all the remenaunt to seke
Is fro my purpos wonder fer.
So may I say, as I said er,
In holy chirch if that I wowe,
My conscience I wolde allowe
Be so that up amendement
I mighte get assignement,
Where for to spede in other place
Such sacrilege I hold a grace.

And thus, my fader, soth to say
In chirche right as in the way
If I might ought of love take,
Such hanfel have I nought forsake.

But finally I me confesse,
 There is in me no halinesse,
 While I her se in haly stede.
 And yet for ought that ever I dede
 No sacrilege of her I toke,
 But if it were of worde or loke
 Or elles if that I her fredde,
 Whan I toward offring her ledde,
 Take therof what I take may,
 For elles bere I nought away,
 For though I wolde ought elles have
 All other thinges ben so save
 And kept with such a privilegge,
 That I may do no sacrilege.
 God wot my wille netheles,
 Though I must nedes kepe pees
 And malgre min so let it passe,
 My will therto is nought the lasse,
 If I might other wise away.
 Forthy, my fader, I you pray,
 Tell what you thenketh therupon,
 If I therof have gilt or none.

Thy will, my sone, is for to blame,
 The remenaunt is but a game,
 That I have herd the telle yit.
 But take this lore into thy wit,
 That alle thing hath time and stede,
 The chirche serveth for the bede,
 The chambre is of an other speche,
 But if thou wifest of the wreche,

How sacrilege it hath about,
 Thou woldest better ben bethought.
 And for thou shalt the more amende,
 A tale I will on the despende.

To alle men as who faith knowe
 It is and in the world through blowe,
 How that of Troie Lamedon
 To Hercules and to Jafon,
 Whan toward Colchos out of Grece
 By see failend upon a piece
 Of londe of Troie reste preide.
 But he hem wrothfully congeide,
 And for they found him so villein,
 Whan they came into Grece ayein
 With power, that they gette might,
 Towardes Troie they hem dight
 And there they token such vengeaunce,
 Wherof stant yet the remembraunce.
 For they destrued king and all
 And lesten but the brente wall,
 The Grekes of Troians many flow
 And prisioners they toke inow,
 Among the whiche there was one
 The kinges doughter Lamedon
 Esiona the faire thing,
 Which unto Thelamon the king
 By Hercules and by thassent
 Of all the hole parlement
 Was at his wille yove and graunted.
 And thus hath Grece Troie daunted,

Hic in amoris causa
 super istius vicii arti-
 culo ponit exemplum,
 et narrat pro eo, quod
 Paris Priami regis fi-
 lius Helenam Mene-
 lai uxorem in qua-
 dam Grecie insula a
 templo Veneris sacri-
 legus abduxit, illa
 Troie famosissima ob-
 sidio per universa or-
 bis climata divulgata
 precipue causabatur,
 ita quod huiusmodi
 sacrilegium non so-
 lum ad ipsius regis
 Priami omniumque
 suorum interitum,
 sed etiam ad perpet-
 uam urbis desolacio-
 nem vindicte fomi-
 tem ministrabat.

And home they torne in such manere.
But after this, now shalt thou here
The cause, why I this tale telle,
Upon the chaunce that befelle.

King Lamedon, which deide thus,
He had a sone one Priamus,
Which was nought thilke time at home,
But whan he herd of this, he come
And found how the citee was falle,
Which he began anon to walle
And made there a citee newe,
That they, which other londes knewe,
Tho saiden that of lime and stone
In all the world so faire was none.
And on that o side of the town
The king let make Ylion,
That highe toure, that stronge place,
Which was adrad of no manace,
Of quarele nor of none engine.
And though men wolde make a mine,
No mannes craft it might approche,
For it was set upon a roche
The walles of the towne about.
Hem stood of all the world no doubt,
And after the proportion
Six gates were there of the town
Of such a forme, of such entaile,
That hem to se was great merveile.
The diches weren brode and depe,
A fewe men it mighte kepe

From all the world, as semeth tho.
But if the goddes weren fo,
Great prees unto that citee drough,
So that there was of people inough
Of burgeis that therinne dwellen,
There may no mannes tunge tellen,
How that citee was riche and good.

Whan all was made and all well stood,
King Priamus tho him bethought,
What they of Grece whilom wrought,
And what was of her fwerd devoured,
And how his fuster deshonoured
With Thelamon away was lad.
And tho thenkend he wax unglad
And fet anone a parlement,
To which the lordes were assent.
In many wise there was spoke,
How that they mighten bene awroke.
But ate laste netheles
They faiden all, accorde and pees
To setten every parte in rest
It thought hem thanne for the best
With resonable amendement.
And thus was Anthenor forth sent
To axen Esiona ayein
And witen what they wolden fain.

So passeth he the see by barge
To Grece for to fay his charge,
The which he saide redely
Unto the lordes by and by.

But where he spake in Grece aboute,
 He herde nought but wordes stoute
 And nameliche of Thelamon.
 The maiden wolde he nought forgon
 He saide for no maner thing,
 And bad him gone home to his king,
 For there gate he none amende
 For ought he couthe do or fende.

This Anthenor ayein goth home
 Unto his king, and whan he come,
 He tolde in Grece of that he herde,
 And how that Thelamon answerde,
 And how they were at her above,
 That they wol nouthur pees ne love,
 But every man shal done his best.
 But for men saien, that night hath rest,
 The king bethought him all that night,
 And erly whan the day was light,
 He toke his counseil of this matere,
 And they accorde in this manere,
 That he withouten any let
 A certain time shulde set
 A parlement to ben avised,
 And in this wise it was avised.
 Of parlement he set a day,
 And that was in the month of may.
 This Priamus had in his ight
 A wife and Hecuba she hight,
 By whom that time eke had he
 Sones five and doughters thre

Besiden hem and thritty mo.
And weren knightes alle tho,
But nought upon his wife begete,
But elles where he might hem gete
Of women, which he hadde knowe.
Such was the world that ilke throwe,
So that he was of children riche,
So therof was no man him liche.

Of parlement the day was come.
There ben the lordes all and some,
Tho was pronounced and purposed
And all the cause hem was desclosed,
How Anthenor in Grece ferde.
They fitten alle still and herde,
And tho spake every man aboute,
There was allegged many a doubte,
And many a proud word spoke also.
But for the moste parte as tho
They wisten nought what was the beste
Or for to werre or for to reste.
But he that was withoutefere,
Hector among the lordes there
His tale tolde in suche a wise
And saide : Lordes, ye ben wise,
Ye knowen this als well as I,
Above all other most worthy
Stant now in Grece the manhod
Of worthinesse and of knighthod.
For who so woll it wel agrope,
To hem belongeth all Europe,

Whiche is the thridde parte even
Of all the world under the heven.
And we be but of folk a fewe,
So were it reson for to shewe
The peril, er we fall therinne.
Better is to leve than beginne
Thing, which as may nought ben acheved,
He is nought wise, that find him greved
And doth so, that his greve be more.
For who that loketh all to-fore
And woll nought se what is behinde,
He may full ofte his harmes finde.
Wick is to strive and have the worse,
We have encheson for to curse,
This wote I well and for to hate
The Grekes, but er that we debate
With hem, that ben of such a might,
It is full good, that every wight
Be of him self right well bethought.
But as for me thus say I nought,
For while that my life woll stonde,
If that ye take werre on honde,
Fall it to the best or to the werst,
I shall my selven be the ferst
To greven hem, what ever I may.
I woll nought ones saie nay
To thing, which that your counceil demeth,
For unto me well more it quemeth
The werre certes than the pees.
But this I saie netheles,

As me belongeth for to say,
Now shape ye the beste way.

Whan Hector hath said his avis,
Next after him tho spake Paris,
Which was his brother, and alaide
What him best thought, and thus he saide :
Strong thing it is to suffre wronge,
And suffre shame is more stronge,
But we have suffred bothe two,
And for all that yet have we do
What so we mighte to reforme
The pees, whan we in suche a forme
Sent Anthenor, as ye wel knowe.
And they her grete wordes blowe
Upon her wrongfull dedes eke,
And he that woll him self nought meke
To pees and list no reson take,
Men fain reson him wol forsake.
For in the multitude of men
Is nought the strengthe, for with ten
It hath be sene in true quarele
Ayein an hunderd false dele,
And had the better of goddes grace.
Thus hath befalle in many place.
And if it like unto you alle,
I will assay how so it falle
Our enemies if I may greve,
For I have caught a gret beleve
Upon a point I wol declare.

This ender day as I gan fare

To hunt unto the grete herte,
 Which was to-fore min houndes sterre,
 And every man went on his side
 Him to pursue, and I to ride
 Began to chase, and soth to say
 Within a while out of my way
 I rode, and niste where I was,
 And slepe me caught and on the grasse
 Beside a well I laid me down
 To slepe and in a vision
 To me the god Mercurie cam,
 Goddesse thre with him he nam
 Minerve, Venus and Juno,
 And in his honde an appel tho
 He helde of gold with letters write.
 And this he dide me to wite,
 How that they put hem upon me,
 That to the fairest of hem thre
 Of gold that appel shulde I yive,
 With ech of hem tho was I thrive
 And eche one faire me behight.
 But Venus said, if that she might
 That appel of my yifte gete,
 She wolde it nevermore foryete,
 And saide, how that in Grece londe
 She wolde bring into min honde
 Of all this erthe the fairest,
 So that me thought it for the best
 To her and yaf the appel tho.
 Thus hope I well, if that I go,

That she for me woll so ordeigne,
That they matere for to pleigne
Shull have, or that I come ayein.
Nowe have ye herd, that I woll sain,
Say ye, what stant in your avis.
And every man tho saide his,
And sondry causes they recorde,
But ate laste they accorde,
That Paris shall to Grece wende,
And thus the parlement toke ende.

Cassandra whan she herd of this,
The which to Paris suster is,
Anone she gan to wepe and weile
And said: Alas, what may us eile,
Fortune with her blinde whele
Ne woll nought let us stonde wele,
For this I dare well undertake,
That if Paris his waie take,
As it is said, that he shall do,
We ben for ever than undo.
The which Cassandra thanne hight
In all the world as it bereth sight,
In bokes as men finde write,
Is that Sibille, of whom ye wite,
That alle men yet clepen sage.
Whan that she wist of this viage,
How Paris shall to Grece fare,
No woman mighte worse fare
Ne sorwe more than she did.
And right so in the same stede

Ferd Helenus, which was her brother
Of prophecy and such another,
And all was holde but a jape,
So that the purpos, which was shape,
Or were hem lefe or were hem lothe,
Was holde, and into Grece he goth
This Paris with his retenaunce.
And as it fell upon his chaunce,
Of Grece he londeth in an ile,
And him was tolde the same while
Of folk, which he began to freine,
Tho was in thile quene Heleine
And eke of contres there about
Of ladies many a lusty rout,
With mochel worthy people also.
And why they comen thider tho,
The cause stood in such a wise
For worship and for sacrifice,
That they to Venus wolden make,
As they to-fore had undertake
Some of good will, some of behest,
For thanne was her highe fest
Within a temple, which was there.
Whan Paris wiste what they were,
Anone he shope his ordenaunce
To gone and done his obeisaunce
To Venus on her haliday
And did upon his best array.
With great richeffe he him behongeth,
As it to such a lord belongeth,

He was nought armed netheles,
But as it were in londe of pees.
And thus he goth forth out of ship
And taketh with him his felaship
In such manere, as I you say,
Unto the temple he helde his way.

Tidinge, which goth over all
To great and smalle forth withall,
Come to the quenes ere and tolde,
How Paris come, and that he wolde
Do sacrifice to Venus.

And whan she herde telle thus,
She thought, how that it ever be,
That she woll him abide and se.

Forth cometh Paris with glad visage
Into the temple on pelrinage,
Where unto Venus the goddesse
He yiveth and offreth great richesse
And praieth her that he praie wolde.
And than aside he gan beholde
And sigh, where that this lady stood,
And he forth in his freshe mood
Goth there she was and made her chere,
As he well couth in his manere,
That of his wordes such plesaunce
She toke, that all her aqueintaunce
Als ferforth as the herte lay
He stale, er that he went away.
So goth he forth and toke his leve
And thought anone, as it was eve,

He wolde done his sacrilege,
 That many a man shulde it abegge.
 Whan he to ship ayein was come,
 To him he hath his counseil nome
 And all devised the matere
 In such a wise, as thou shalt here.
 Withinne night all prively
 His men he warneth by and by,
 That they be redy armed sone
 For certain thing, whiche is to done.
 And they anone ben redy alle
 And echone other gan to calle
 And went hem out upon the stronde
 And toke a purpos there on londe
 Of what thing that they wolden do,
 Toward the temple and forth they go.
 So fell it of devocion
 Heleine in contemplacion
 With many an other worthy wight
 Was in the temple and woke all night
 To bid and pray unto thymage
 Of Venus, as was than usage,
 So that Paris right as him list
 Into the temple er they it wist
 Came with his men all sodeinly.
 And all at ones set askry
 In hem, which in the temple were,
 For tho was mochel people there,
 But of defence was no bote,
 So suffren they, that suffre mote.

Paris unto the quene wente
And her in both his armes hente
With him and with his felaship,
And forth they bere her into ship.
Up goth the faile, and forth they went,
And suche a wind fortune hem sent,
Till they the haven of Troie caught,
Where out of ship anone they straught
And gone hem forth toward the town,
The which came with proceffion
Ayein Paris to fene his pray.
And every man began to fay
To Paris and his felaship
All that they couthen of worship,
Was none so litel man in Troy,
That he ne made merthe and joy
Of that Paris had wonne Heleine.
But all that merthe is sorwe and peine
To Helenus and to Cassandre.
For they it tolden shame and sclaundre
And los of all the comun grace,
That Paris out of haly place
By stelth hath take a mannes wife,
Wherof he shall lese his life
And many a worthy man therto
And all the citee be fordo,
Which never shall be made ayein.
And so it fell, right as they sain,
The sacrilege, which he wrought,
Was cause, why the Gregois fought

Unto the town and it belay
 And wolden never part away,
 Till what by sleight, and what by strength
 They had it wonne in brede and length
 And brent and flain that was withinne.

Now se, my sone, which a sinne
 Is sacrilege in haly stede.
 Beware therfore and bid thy bede
 And do nothing in haly chirche,
 But that thou might by reson wirche.
 And eke take hede of Achilles,
 Whan he unto his love chees
 Polixena, that was also
 In haly temple of Apollo,
 Which was the cause why he deide
 And all his lust was laid aside.
 And Troilus upon Creseide
 Also his firste love laide
 In haly place, and how it ferde
 As who faith all the world it herde.
 Forsake he was for Diomedé,
 Such was of love his laste mede.

Confessor. Forthy my sone, I wolde rede
 By this ensample as thou might rede
 Seche elles where thou wilt thy grace
 And ware the well in haly place,
 What thou to love do or speke
 In aunter if it so be wreke,
 As thou hast herd me tell to-fore,
 And take good hede also therfore.

Upon the forme of avarice
More than of any other vice
I have devided in parties
The braunches, which of compaignies
Through out the world in generall
Be now the leders over all
Of covetise and of perjurie,
Of fals brocage and of usurie,
Of scarsenefse and of unkindeship,
Which never drough to felaship,
Of robberie and of prive stelth,
Which done is for the worldes welth,
Of ravine and of sacrilege,
Which maketh the conscience agregge,
All though it may richesse atteigne,
It floureth but it shall not greine
Unto the fruit of rightwisnesse.
But who that wolde do largesse
Upon the reule, as it is yive,
So might a man in trouthe live
Toward his god and eke also
Toward the world, for bothe two
Largesse awaiteth as belongeth
To neither part, that he ne wrongeth,
He kepeth him self, he kepeth his frendes,
So stant he sauf to both his endes,
That he exceedeth no mesure,
So well he can him self mesure,
Wherof, my sone, thou shalt wite,
So as the philosophre hath write.

13. *Prodigus et parcus duo sunt extremaque, largus
Est horum medius plebis in ore bonus.*

Nota hic de virtute largitatis, que ad oppositum avaricie inter duo extrema videlicet parcimoniam et prodigalitatem specialiter consistit.

Betwene the two extremities
 Of vice stont the propertes
 Of vertue, and to prove it so
 Take avarice and take also
 The vice of prodegalite,
 Betwene hem liberalite,
 Which is the vertue of largesse,
 Stant and governeth his noblesse.
 For tho two vices in discorde
 Stond ever, as I find of recorde,
 So that betwene her two debate
 Largesse reuleth his estate,
 For in such wise as avarice,
 As I to-fore have told the vice,
 Through streit holding and through scarf-
 Stant contraire to largesse, [nesse
 Right so stant prodegalite
 Revers, but nought in such degre.
 For so as avarice spareth
 And for to kepe his tresor careth,
 That other all his own and more
 Ayein the wise mannes lore
 Yiveth and despendeth here and there,
 So that him reccheth never where,
 While he may borwe, he woll despende
 Till ate last he saith : I wende.
 But that is spoken all to late,
 For than is pouerte at the gate

And taketh him even by the sleve.
For erst woll he no wisdom leve,
And right as avarice is sinne,
That wold his trefor kepe and winne,
Right so is prodegalite.
But of largeſſe in his degre,
Which even ſtant betwene the two,
The highe god and man alſo
The vertue eche of hem commendeth.
For he him ſelven firſt amendeth,
That over all his name ſpredeth
And to all other, where it nedeth,
He yiveth his good in ſuch a wiſe,
That he maketh many a man ariſe,
Whiche elles ſhulde falle low.
Largeſſe may nought be unknowe.
For what lond that he regneth inne,
It may nought faile for to winne
Through his deſerte love and grace,
Where it ſhall faile in other place.
And thus betwene to moch and lite
Largeſſe, which is nought to wite,
Holt ever forth the middel way.
But who that torne wol away
Fro that, to prodegalite
Anone he leſt the proprete
Of vertu and goth to the vice.
For in ſuch wiſe as avarice
Leſth for ſcarſeneſſe his good name,
Right ſo that other is to blame,

Which through his wast mesure exceedeth.
 For no man wot what harm that bredeth
 [But mochel joie ther betideth,*
 Where that largeſſe an herte guideth.
 For his mesure is ſo governed,
 That he bothe parts is lerned
 To god and to the world alſo,
 He doth reſon to bothe two.
 The pouer folk of his almeſſe
 Relieved ben in the diſtreſſe
 Of thurſt, of hunger and of colde,
 Ne yift of him was never ſolde,
 But frely yive, and netheles
 The mighty god of his encres
 Rewardeth him of double grace,
 The heven he doth him to purchaſe
 And yiveth him eke the worldes good.
 And thus the cote for the hood
 Largeſſe taketh, and yet no finne
 He doth, how ſo that ever he winne.

Luc. Omni ha-
benti dabitur.

What man hath hors men given him hors,
 And who ne hath of him no force,
 For he may thenne on fote go,
 The world hath ever ſtonde ſo.
 But for to loken of the tweie,
 A man to go the fiker weie

Beacius eſt dare
quam accipere.

Better is to yive than to take,
 With yifte a man may frendes make,

* From MSS. Harl. Wanting in MS. Stafford and the printed editions.

But who that taketh or great or small,
He taketh a charge forth with all
And stant nought fre til it be quit.
So for to deme in mannes wit,
It helpeth more a man to have
His owne good than for to crave
Of other men and make him bonde,
Wher elles he may stond unbond.
Senec counseileth in this wise
And saith: But if the good suffice
Unto the liking of the will,
Withdrawe thy lust and hold the still
And be to thy good suffisaunt,
For that thing is appurtenaunt
To trouthe and causeth to be fre
After the reule of charite,
Which first beginneth of him selve.
For if thou richest other twelve,
Wherof thou shalt thy self be pouer,
I not what thank thou might recouer,]
While that a man hath good to yive,
With greates routes he may live
And hath his frendes over all,
And everich of him telle shall,
The while he hath his fulle packe
They say: A good felaw is Jacke.
Whan it faileth ate last,
Anone his prise they overcast,
For than is there none other lawe,
But Jacke was a good felawe.

Seneca. Si res tue
tibi non sufficient,
fac ut rebus tuis
sufficiat.

Apostolus. Ordina-
ta caritas incipit
a se ipsa.

Whan they him pouer and nedy se,
They let him passe and fare well he,
Al that he wend of compaignie
Is thanne torned to folie.

But now to speke in other kinde
Of love, a man may suche finde,
That where they come in every rout,
They cast and waft her love about
Till all her time is overgone,
And thanne have they love none.
For he that loveth over all,
It is no reson, that he shall
Of love have any proprete.
Forthy my sone, avise the,
If thou of love hast ben to large.
For suche a man is nought to charge.
And if it so be, that thou hast
Despended al thy time in waft
And set thy love in sondry place,
Though thou the substaunce of thy grace
Lese at the last, it is on wonder,
For he that put him selven under,
As who saith comun over all,
He lest the love speciall
Of any one, if she be wise.
For love shall nought bere his prise
By reson, whan it passeth one.
So have I sen full many one,
That were of love wel at ese,
Which after fell in great disese

Through wast of love, that they spent
In fondry places where they went.
Right so, my sone, I axe of the,
If thou with prodegalite
Hast here and there thy love wasted?

Confessor.

My fader, nay, but I have tasted
In many a place as I have go,
And yet love I never one of tho,
But for to drive forth the day.
For leveth well, my hert is ay
Withoute mo for evermore
All upon one, for I no more
Desire, but her love alone.
So make I many a prive mone,
For well I fele I have despended
My longe love and nought amended
My spede, for ought I finde yit.
If this be wast unto your wit
Of love and prodegalite,
Now, gode fader, demeth ye.
But of o thing I woll me thrive,
That I shall for no love thrive,
But if her self me woll releve.

Amans.

My sone, that I may well leve,
And netheles me semeth so,
For ought that thou hast yet misdo
Of time, whiche thou hast spended,
It may with grace ben amended.
For thing which may be worth the cost
Perchaunce is nouter wast ne lost,

Confessor.

For what thing stant on aventure,
 That can no worldes creature
 Tell in certain, how it shall wende,
 Till he therof may sene an ende.
 So that I note as yet therfore,
 If thou, my sone, hast wone or lore.
 For ofte time, as it is sene,
 Whan somer hath lost all his grene
 And is with winter wast and bare,
 That him is left nothing to spare,
 All is recovered in a throwe,
 The colde windes overblowe,
 And stilled ben the sharpe shoures,
 And sodeinlich ayein his floures
 The somer happneth and is riche,
 And so parcas thy grace is liche.
 My sone, though thou be now pouer
 Of love, yet thou might recouer.

Amans. My fader, certes graunt mercy,
 Ye have me taught so redily,
 That ever while I live shall
 The better I may be ware with all
 Of thing, which ye have said er this.
 But evermore how that it is
 Toward my shrifte, as it belongeth,
 To wit of other points me longeth,
 Wherof that ye me wolden teche
 With all min herte I you besече.

Explicit liber quintus.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

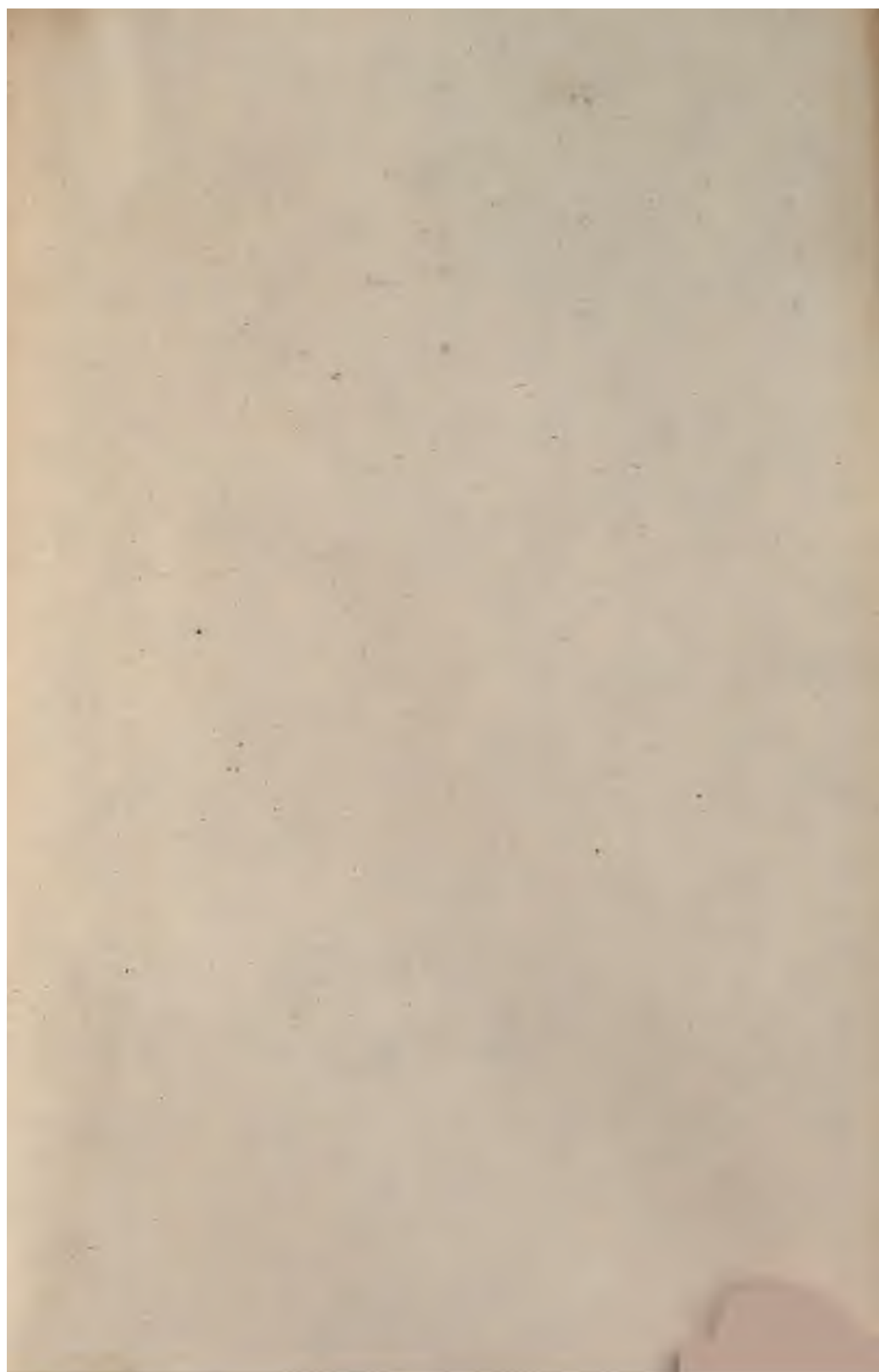


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